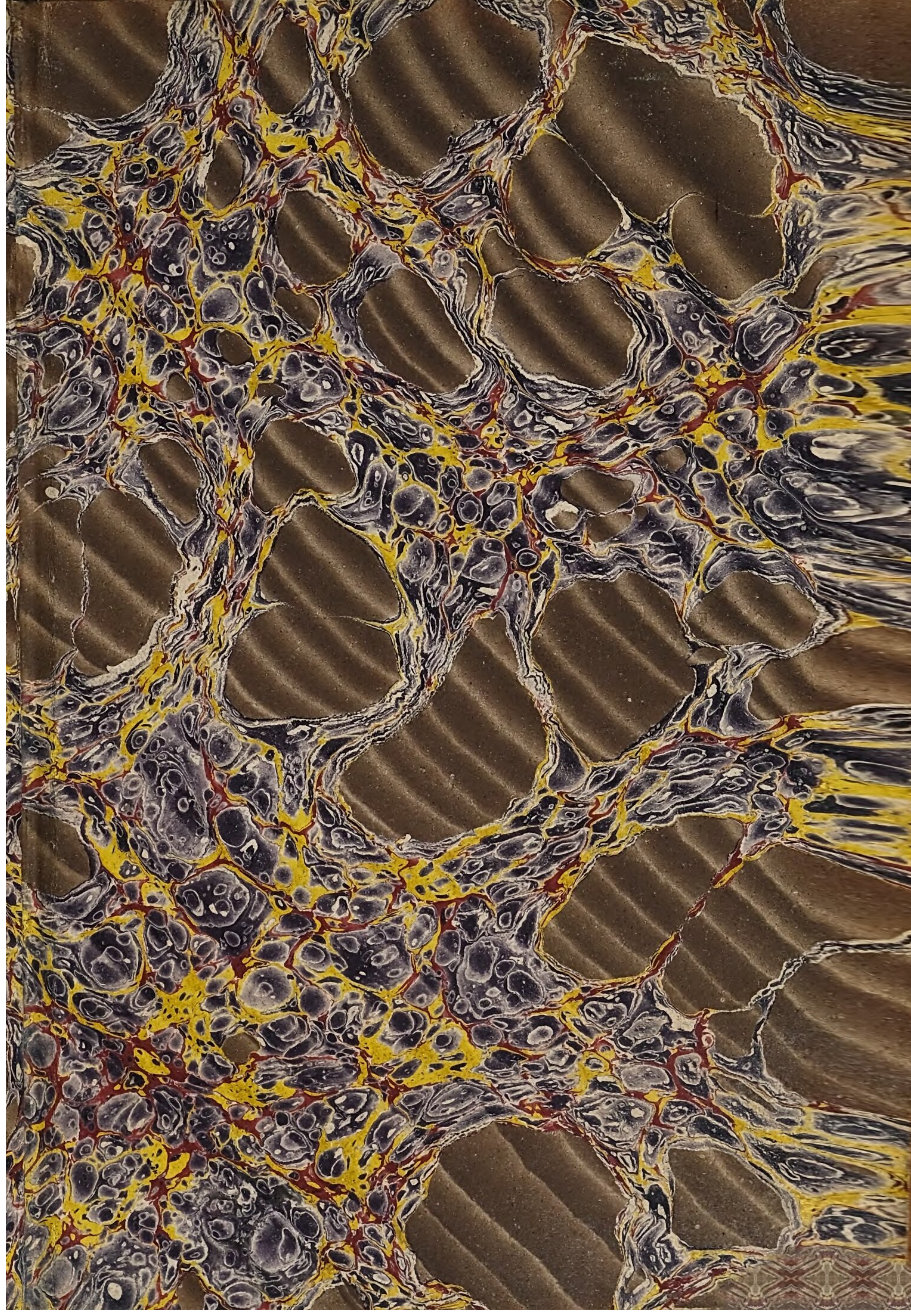






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SAYINGS AND DOINGS.
A
SERIES
OF
SKETCHES FROM LIFE.

Full of wise saws and modern instances.

SHAKSPEARE.

SECOND EDITION.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON
PRINTED FOR HENRY COLBURN,
NEW BURLINGTON-STREET.

1824.

SAYINGS AND DOINGS.

SERIES

OF

SKETCHES FROM LIFE.

LONDON :

PRINTED BY S. AND R. BENTLEY, DORSET-STREET.



LONDON

PRINTED FOR HENRY COLSON

NEW BUNTINGTON-STREET

1834

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE French have, time out of mind, written short dramatic pieces, in which they have illustrated or exemplified the truth of old sayings; and, as every body knows, the dramatic pieces so written, have themselves been called “Proverbs.”

Whenever these “Proverbs” have been translated or adapted to our stage, so much does it take to satisfy an English audience, that three or four of them have been generally combined to make up one farce; and consequently, the action alone has been preserved without regard to the *original point* which their authors had in view, when they framed them.

I mention this, because I am not aware that any dramatic illustration of a single proverb has with *that view* been given to the English public. It was, however, from these dramas that I first caught the idea of noting down what I saw passing in society, in order to judge, by the events of real life, the truth or fallacy of those axioms which have been handed down to us with a character for “usefulness and dignity; as conducive to the understanding of philosophy, of which they are the very remains, and which they are adapted to persuade.”

To regulate a life by the observation of proverbs would be to do an extremely silly thing. I take exactly the converse of such a proposition: I have watched the world, and have set down all that I have seen; and out of this collection of materials have thrown together a few historical illustrations of quaint sayings, the force of which, the characters

introduced by me have unconsciously exemplified in their lives and conduct.

In short, I have thought it a curious matter of speculation to compare the “DOINGS” of the moderns with the “SAYINGS” of the ancients; and therefore submit to the public with all humility my first portion of “*wise saws*,” illustrated by “*modern instances*.” Should they be favourably received I may be induced to continue them.

London, Jan. 26, 1824.

Advertisement to the Second Edition.

The success of the following Sketches having rendered a second edition necessary, the author avails himself of this opportunity most distinctly to disclaim any intention of drawing the characters introduced into them, from living individuals, which several of the Reviews and periodical publications have erroneously stated him to have done.

London, March 27, 1824.

DANVERS.

Notes on the Second Edition

A number of the following alterations have been made in the second edition of this work. The first is a new chapter on the subject of the history of the world, which has been added to the end of the book. The second is a new chapter on the subject of the history of the world, which has been added to the end of the book. The third is a new chapter on the subject of the history of the world, which has been added to the end of the book. The fourth is a new chapter on the subject of the history of the world, which has been added to the end of the book. The fifth is a new chapter on the subject of the history of the world, which has been added to the end of the book. The sixth is a new chapter on the subject of the history of the world, which has been added to the end of the book. The seventh is a new chapter on the subject of the history of the world, which has been added to the end of the book. The eighth is a new chapter on the subject of the history of the world, which has been added to the end of the book. The ninth is a new chapter on the subject of the history of the world, which has been added to the end of the book. The tenth is a new chapter on the subject of the history of the world, which has been added to the end of the book.

DANVERS

DANVERS.

It appears to me, that there would be little interest or amusement furnishable to a reader in the history of the "early days" of Mr. Thomas Burton, for such is the unromantic name of my hero.—It is true, books have been published descriptive of the infantine peculiarities and the puerile sagacity of daughters and sons, by fond, blind, and silly parents; but as the miraculous proofs of genius afforded to society by a lad under fifteen can be of very small importance to any body not personally connected with him, I shall skip over the beginning of Burton's mortal career, and introduce him to my readers at the age of twenty-six, just called to the bar, having in his day, literally swept Oxford of prizes, and taken a first class degree with the most unqualified *éclat*.

His progress in the law was much like that of other men of his standing.—Good-natured attornies sent him half-guinea motions, and such persons as had little to risk and nothing to lose, intrusted him occasionally with briefs, which afforded him, out of term, a mutton chop and a pint of black and intoxicating stuff, dignified by the neighbouring tavern-keepers into Port wine, and these, joined to the pleasing opportunities of now and then reading a declaration, comprised the principal advantages which Burton derived from his professional proficiency.

Burton was a young man of extremely good manners, vivacious and ready ; with a turn for the fine arts, he possessed various minor accomplishments, and stood his ground remarkably well in society, where a general smattering of popular sciences, and a quick recollection of fashionable technicalities, gave him the power of descanting upon subjects, with which in point of fact he was only cursorily acquainted.

The Greek and Latin which had gained him honours at the University, were of as much service to him after he quitted it, as are the

high-flown accomplishments of the modern Miss, when she *degenerates* into the domestic wife; and the constant study of Burton was to rub off the academic rust as assiduously as possible. He possessed an indescribable sweetness of manner, and (which never failed to win) an appearance of universal sympathy. His eye would sparkle at the worst joke of a would-be wit, and fill with tears at the imaginary distresses of a twaddling sentimentalist—he seemed to enter into every feeling, to associate himself, as it were, with the very thoughts and wishes of his companions, and contrived, in a way of his own, to make each individual in the room with him fancy himself or herself the most interesting object of his consideration.—Full of anecdote, with an elegant mind, good taste, and great readiness, he was naturally sought, courted, and admired: the consequence of which was, that his retirement in Garden-Court was seldom visited out of term; and by degrees the disinclination he felt to the prosecution of his profession grew into absolute disgust.

His talent, however, was not to be subdued or overcome: it was of that commanding na-

ture which ensures success; and never certainly did man in the outset of life meet with a greater share of good fortune than our hero. He had secured amongst his friends, men of power and influence, and at eight and twenty found himself possessed of an office worth a couple of thousand pounds per annum, which, from its peculiar nature, required his residence in one of the Western counties of England; or if it did not, seemed as if its duties would be better fulfilled by what, to any other young man, would have been a sacrifice of London pleasures and fashionable amusements.

Armed with this adequate income, in addition to all his real talents and social qualities, Burton became an object of admiration to the young ladies of the circle in which he moved, and of ambition to their various aunts and mothers, who, like most aunts and mothers spread over the surface of the globe, were extremely anxious that their nieces and daughters should be well married and comfortably settled.

It was admirable foolery to see how they fidgeted and manœuvred at county balls and winter assemblies, to get him into their little

coteries; and to watch the bright eyes of the rural damsels aching with gazing on attractions which never might be theirs. Burton, it is true, wished to marry; but being too sensible to be over-sentimental, resolved to consider before he decided, and calculate deliberately upon what would really contribute to his happiness in a wife.

First of all, he determined that although beauty is fading, and a lovely face loses its novelty, and consequently much of its charm by constant association with it, it was still essentially necessary that his wife should not be ugly:—"plain, but uncommonly amiable, and with such a heart,"—as one woman says, when describing another of whose attractions she stands in no awe,—did by no means come up to his notion of what was actually requisite in a partner for life. A bright and sparkling eye—a look of sense—animation—a varying expression, and features which should take a different cast, when their mistress heard of the death of a child, from that which they would wear when she lost a pool at loo—an air, a manner, gentleness and grace—a lady-like figure—a feminine diffidence—an

amiable softness—a total absence of affectation, and an inexhaustible fund of good humour, were essentials with him ; and if the union of these qualities in one woman were not discoverable, then Burton devoted himself, in his own mind, to a life of perpetual single blessedness.

Moreover, besides these actual qualifications which his imaginary bride was to have, there were sundry others which she was not upon any consideration to possess. She was on no account to be learned : she might speak French ; but if she did, she must do it well and fluently—Latin and Greek were interdicted ; the mathematics utterly banished. She might, perhaps, play and sing, but not by any means well enough to be expected or called upon to exhibit like a buffoon in company. The less she liked dancing the better ; waltzing was out of the question altogether. If she drew, it was not to be after the antique. The less she dabbled in the arts, however, the more desirable ; she was to be religious, and devoid of cant ; charitable, without parade ; and rational, without pretension ; she was to look at the world as one of its inhabitants ; not to expect divine attributes in any of her fellow-

creatures, nor to affect the possession of them herself; she was to be extremely neat in her person; never to touch upon politics, and always to call things by their right names.

These were what Burton had established to himself as essentials to his happiness; and with an admitted predisposition to marry, started like Cœlebs in search of a wife.

Considerably smitten with pretty Miss Martin, his flame was extinguished by hearing her descant upon the etymology of a Greek word with Doctor Gabble. Subsequently, after a month's close devotion to Miss Dawson, his heart regained its liberty, by finding her praise a cousin of hers as having an "exquisite mind and assert that in fact *she was all soul!*" Miss Tripto held sovereign sway till she left a rational *tête-à-tête* in a corner with him, to waltz with a tipped and tufted hussar, who, under the sanction of her respectable mother, proceeded forthwith to pull and haul her about the room to a die-away German air. Many failed in their sieges upon his affections, by minor variations from his established demands; and it seemed as if this most favoured and desired personage was doomed to eternal

celibacy, when chance threw the amiable Mary Gatcombe in his way.

This paragon of perfection knew no language except her own. She neither played nor sang; her dancing was confined to the common English jog-trot performance of a line of men placed immediately opposite to a line of women,—the one party being employed in flirting fans, and the other in fanning flirts. She had a strong mind and particularly good sense. To *her* the imagery of poetry, or the language of enthusiasm, was as unintelligible as Greek or Hebrew; she had sufficient intellect to conduct herself with the strictest propriety, to judge prudentially of events in which she herself was concerned, and to decide discreetly upon every point submitted to her reason; always observing, by the way, that she seldom applied her faculties to subjects not strictly useful, and conducive either to her comfort or her advancement, her health or her pleasure.

She had dark eyes, full of sweetness and gentleness, easily lighted by mirth, into a sparkling vivacity. Fortunately for our well-starred hero, they were favourably turned upon

him: the conviction of this fact flashed across his mind one evening after a supper, which succeeded to a ball given by the Duke of Alverstoke, (the great man of his neighbourhood,) to the whole county. Burton had admired her for some time; had implied what he felt by his marked and assiduous attentions; he had watched and calculated upon her qualities, her manner, temper, disposition, and accomplishments, with reference to his own standard of perfection; and if there were any objections existent in his mind, the glance which conveyed the state of her feelings to him on the evening in question, dispelled them in a moment, as the sun-beam of England dissipates the dew, or rather as the *coup de soleil* of the Indies annihilates every thing upon which it happens to fall.

The train fired by the bright eyes of Miss Gatcombe soon exploded, and after an increasing intimacy of three weeks, the eclaireissement anticipated by the saints and sages of the vicinage, took place: there were, alas! no fallings upon knees, no violent trepidations, no moonlight rambles, no whispering breezes, no responsive echoes, no tremblings, no throw-

ings of eyes under tables or into corners of rooms; the affair was terminated in a short *tête-à-tête* in Lady Gatcombe's *boudoir*, in which, in the most rational yet delicate manner, the unpretending Mary owned a reciprocal feeling to our hero, and surrendered herself and thirty thousand pounds into his possession.

There are men in the world, who, before they proceed on the march to matrimony, obtain a *carte du pays* from the Prerogative Office, and satisfy their anxiety as to what a girl HAS, before they take the trouble to ascertain what she IS. This was not Burton's case; he had revenue sufficient to enable him to live comfortably and respectably, even had his wife been destitute; and although the intelligence that Mary actually had the absolute controul of thirty thousand pounds, chargeable only with a life-annuity to her mother, was not disagreeable to his ear, I verily believe that it did not add one jot to the sum of happiness which he felt he had acquired, when the blushing girl confessed her attachment, and gave him upon his lips a receipt in full for all the anxiety he had undergone during the previous campaign.

It is extremely disagreeable, for the sake of my romantic readers, to be obliged to admit that no difficulties intervened between this acceptance and the marriage of the happy parties; a few weeks devoted to preparation slipped almost imperceptibly away, and before the end of the month, Mr. Thomas Burton led to the Hymeneal altar Miss Gatcombe, daughter and heiress of Sir William Gatcombe, of Durnford House, in the county of Somerset, Knight. And here I most certainly should have taken the liberty of introducing to my reader the amiable mother of my heroine, but, alas! relentless death took the old lady from the world so shortly after her daughter's marriage, that it does not seem at all necessary, or even likely to be conducive to the illustration which I have in view, to bring my friends acquainted with her; I therefore, for their sakes, avoid the two evils of wasting time, and exciting an interest, which a person so exemplary, necessarily must have created, merely to give the pain which truth would have compelled me to inflict so soon after her appearance in the action of my story.

The grief concomitant with such an event,

and which as much as possible afflicted my heroine, was dissipated by the anxiety which arose from her own situation ; and before the close of the year, although the *Edax rerum* had robbed her of a parent, she had become a parent herself ; and a daughter crowned the happiness of her union with Burton.

Never, in the whole course of my observation of the world and its ways, did I feel more perfectly at ease, as to speaking truth, than in calling this young couple happy—they were perfectly so. Mary thought Burton perfection ; and when she read of Crichton, she would shut the book and turn with entire satisfaction to her husband, not as a living illustration of that extraordinary man's extraordinary qualities, but as a being so much his superior, as to render all the feats of the lost wonder mere child's play. On the other hand, Burton saw in his Mary every thing he required in a wife—first of all, that devotion which I have just described, was in itself by no means unsatisfactory ; then her placid temper, her excessive tenderness, and apparent ready acquiescence in all his views and wishes—I say apparent, because she was one of those

quiet, sweetly-dispositioned persons, who invariably carry their points by *seeming* to yield; and who, as she went on, living with Burton, confirmed, as if intuitively, (for the chances are, she had never read them,) the merit of those lines of the immortal POPE, which bid the wife be one—

“ Who never answers till her husband cools ;
And, if she rules him, never shews she rules ;
Charms by accepting, by submitting sways,
And has her humour most when she obeys.”

It seemed, as if she had made these lines a theme for illustration—a rule of action; and since disguise is quite useless between persons thrown together as the reader and myself happen to be, it may be as well at once to say, that she succeeded in governing her husband and all that was his, with the most absolute domination; without his ever being in the smallest degree aware of his own entire subjection to her will and wishes,—so closely hidden were the chains of thralldom by the flowers of love.

If one thing could be selected from all things in the known world, which might be

considered a drawback to the general comfort which the happy couple enjoyed, it was a little rankling with respect to the family of the Duke of Alverstoke, whose park joined the grounds surrounding Burton's cottage. There was a stiff shyness about his Grace and his family, and a cold distant civility when any of them encountered the Burtons, which my hero could not brook. Report says, that, in one of Burton's romantic moments, he had aspired to the hand of his Grace's second daughter, and that the bare insinuation of so much presumption had been most unceremoniously treated by his Grace and his eldest son: this fact, however, wants confirmation; and those who thought best of Burton attributed the evident coldness of the ennobled family to their avowed distaste for the society of their country neighbours,—except at public parties—a sweeping exclusion, from which Burton imagined his own qualities and those of his adored Mary, might have secured them at least a splendid exception.—They certainly did not; and after several vain attempts to gain a footing at Milford Park, Burton's excessive admiration for the illustrious family

turned into something very like hatred, envy, and uncharitableness. If he bought a new picture or a new horse, if he built a new room, or a new carriage, there existed in all such actions a desire to astonish, confound, or pique the Duke, stronger than any hope of pleasing himself or his wife: in short he was always best satisfied by maintaining something of an equality with his noble neighbour.

Burton's house, as far as it went, was perfection; his library complete; his grounds beautifully laid out; his horses the fleetest and finest; his cellar amply stored with the choicest wines; his pictures perfect *bijoux*. Every thing he possessed was of the very best quality, and nothing, except this little awkwardness of feeling towards the Duke, interfered with his happiness or repose.

Previous to their departure for London, the Duchess invited the Burtons to dinner; the invitation was accepted and the party made. Not a soul except the apothecary of the neighbouring town was there; the dinner was served up magnificently at seven o'clock; it lasted till twenty minutes after eight; the champagne needed nothing colder to chill it than the

company ; the daughters spoke only to their brothers, the brothers only to their parents ; Burton was placed on the right of the Duchess, Kilman the apothecary on her left : the whole of her Grace's conversation was directed to the latter, and turned upon the nature of infection, in a dissertation on the relative dangers of typhus and scarlet fever, which was concluded by an assurance on the part of her Grace, that she would endeavour to prevail upon Doctor Somebody from London to come down and settle in the neighbourhood — a piece of information which was received by her medical hearer with as much composure as a man could muster, while listening to intelligence likely to overturn his practice and ruin his family.

The Duke drank wine with Mrs. Burton, and condescended to enquire after her little one ; his Grace then entered into a lengthened dissertation with his second son upon the mode of proceeding which he intended to adopt in visiting Oxford the next morning ; and concluded the dialogue by an elaborate panegyric upon his own character, that of his children, his horses, his wines, and his servants.

After a brief sitting, the ladies retired, and coffee being shortly brought to the dinner-table, the gentlemen proceeded to the drawing-room, which they found occupied only by her Grace and Mrs. Burton: the Lady Elizabeth having retired with a head-ach, and the Lady Jane having accompanied her as nurse.

About this period a small French clock on the chimney-piece struck ten: never were sounds so silvery sweet on mortal ear as those to Mrs. Burton. Her misery had been complete; for, in addition to the simple horror of a *tête-à-tête* with the Duchess—a thing in itself sufficient to have frozen a salamander, her Grace had selected as a subject for conversation the science of craniology, the name of which, thanks to her unsophistication, had never reached Mary's ears; and the puzzle she was in to make out what it was, to what body it referred, to what part of a body, or what the organs were, to which her Grace kept perpetually alluding, may better be conceived than imagined. The Duchess voted Mary a simpleton; Mary set her Grace down for a bore; and Mary, with all her simplicity, was the nearer the mark of the two.

Who, after retiring from a party blazing in all the splendour of feathers, finery, dress, diamonds, gewgaws, and gaiety, has not felt the exquisite charm of the quiet repose of home? Who has not experienced the joy of casting off restraint, and throwing one's self into one's own comfortable chair by one's own fire-side, and thanking one's stars that the trouble of pleasure is over? If we all have felt that, we may easily imagine the sensations of our domesticated couple, when they found themselves relieved from the horrid restraint of Milford Park;—the bolt uprightness with which Mary sat upon the hard shining sky-blue silk sofa with the Duchess, was abandoned for the disembarrassed lounge on her own ottoman; and the cold, formal, half-whispered conversation, of which little was to be heard sounding through the spacious saloon, save the sibilations of the s's's which occurred in the course of it, metamorphosed into comfortable chat, replete with *piquant* remarks upon their dear friends, and interlarded here and there with sundry little coaxings and kissings to which, although married nearly a year and a half, Mr. Burton considered himself still entitled.

This domestic *tête-à-tête* concluded with the comfortable resolution, that they were much happier than the Duke and Duchess—that nothing could induce them, with all contingencies to boot, to change lots ; and they retired to rest, congratulating themselves that the day was over, and the events of it not likely soon to recur.

Months rolled on ; spring strewed the lawn with daisies ; summer decked the beds with flowers ; and autumn yielded her golden store, but no variation was perceptible in the felicity of our hero and heroine. Towards the close of the year, another daughter blessed their union ; and very early in her life, the lovely Fanny was pronounced likely to eclipse the charming Emma, who was about eleven months her senior.

The Burtons did not much associate with their neighbours ; but as winter closed in, and they abandoned a once entertained intention of visiting London, they joined more sociably in the society of the contiguous town, and entered into its little coteries with the most amiable good-nature. The rector, a man of superior mind and character, the Milfords,

the Howards, the Whites, the Wilsons, and families of that class were perpetually with them; and as restraint and formality were forbidden at Sandown Cottage, an invitation thither was considered quite an event by the younger branches of the surrounding houses.

Early in the spring succeeding the birth of her second child, Mrs. Burton received a letter announcing the arrival in England of Mr. Frumpton Danvers, her mother's uncle, whose days had been spent in various parts of the world, collecting and accumulating wealth; and who had returned to his native land, so late in life as to have survived all his friends and connexions, except this daughter of his niece. His property was immense—almost incalculably so—in the West Indies, in the East Indies, in England, in Ireland, and in Scotland, he had estates and riches, and few people ventured to guess, to use the delicate and commonly-accepted term, what he would *cut up* for. One thing was quite certain; besides all the doubtful property he possessed, three hundred thousand pounds stood in his name in the Three per Cents.; and the difficulties he had for years

encountered in amassing this fortune were now surpassed by the still greater one of making up his mind to whom he should bequeath it.

The old gentleman was a mannerist and an egotist—self-opiniated, obstinate, positive, and eternally differing with every body round him—his temper was soured by ill health; while, unfortunately for his associates, his immense fortune gave him, at least he thought it did, the power and authority to display all its little varieties in their full natural vigour.

He was the meanest and most liberal man alive, the gentlest and the most passionate, alternately wise and weak, harsh and kind, bountiful and avaricious, just as his constitution felt the effects of the weather or of society—he was, in short, an oddity, and had proved himself through life constant but to one object alone—his own aggrandizement: in this he had succeeded to his heart's content; and had at seventy-four amassed sufficient wealth to make him always extremely uneasy, and at times perfectly wretched.

When it is recollected that Mrs. Burton was his only existing relative, that he was thus far advanced in years, infirm, and almost alone in

the world, and that he had sought her out and addressed a kind and affectionate letter to her, it may be easily supposed that she was not a little flattered and pleased by the event. She communicated to the dear partner of all her joys the unexpected incident. He entered immediately into her feelings, saw with her the prospects which the affections of this old gentleman opened to their view, and, without a moment's delay, resolved, as she had indeed suggested, that an invitation should be despatched to Mr. Danvers to visit Sandown Cottage.

The days which passed after this request was committed to paper, and with all due formality, sealed with the Burton arms, addressed and conveyed to the post, were consumed in a sort of feverish anxiety. Mary had never known her uncle, never of course seen him, and the only thing intended to bear a resemblance to his person with which her eyes had been gratified, was a full-sized miniature, painted when he was twenty-one years of age, by a second-rate artist, representing him with his hair extremely well powdered, rolled in large curls over his ears, and tied behind with pink ribbands, his

cheeks blooming like the rose, his solitaire gracefully twining round his neck and falling over his shoulders, well contrasted with a French grey coat, edged with silver, and adorned with salmon-coloured frogs; a sprig of jessamine springing from his button-hole, and a diagonal patch of court-plaster resting upon his off-cheek: by this record of his appearance, Mrs. Burton had regulated her notions of his attractions; and whenever she heard her rich uncle Danvers spoken of, and his wealth descanted upon, she sighed with the Countess's page, "and he is so handsome, Susan!"

In four days the anxious couple received the following reply to their invitation, which, as it is perhaps characteristic, I have transcribed *verbatim et literatim* from the original.

"Ibbotson's Hotel, Vere Street,
Cavendish Square, April —, —.

"MY DEAR NIECE,

"I duly received your's, dated the 5th inst. and have to acknowledge same. You might have spared your compliments, because as the proverb says, 'Old birds are not caught

with chaff.'—It will please me very much to go and see you and your husband: hope you have made a suitable match; at the same time cannot help observing that I never heard the name of Burton, except as relating to strong ale, which I do not drink because it makes me bilious. I cannot get to you yet, because I have promised my old friend General M'Cart-ridge to accompany him to Cheltenham, to drink the waters, which are recommended to me. I will perhaps go to you from Cheltenham the end of May, but I never promise, because I hate breaking a promise once made, and if I should find Cheltenham very pleasant, perhaps I shall not go to see you at all.

“ I certainly thank you for your attention, but I hate to be under obligations; I have therefore directed my agent to send you down with great care my two adjutants, which I have brought home with vast trouble, together with the largest rattle-snake ever imported alive into England. I meant them as presents to the Royal Society, but they have no place to keep them in, and therefore I want you to take care of them, as you tell me you have space about your house.

“ My kitmagar and a couple of coolies, or rather beasties, who have attended me to England, will look after them and keep them clean. The fact, that one of the adjutants is a cock, is highly satisfactory, and I am not without hopes of securing a breed of them to this country. I consider them a treasure, and I know by confiding them to you, I shall secure good treatment for them. You will allow the men to remain with them till further advice from your affectionate Uncle,

“ FRUMPTON DANVERS.

“ P. S. I am in hopes of being able to add two or three bucks from Cashmire to the collection.”

“ Bucks and adjutants, my dear ?” exclaimed Mrs. Burton, looking at her husband, and laying down the letter.

“ Goats and rattle-snakes, my love,” replied Burton, taking it up, and beginning mechanically to re-read it.—“ Why, my angel, has your uncle got a menagerie ?”

“ I am sure I do not know, Mr. Burton,” said his wife, quite alarmed at the approaching invasion of their quiet retreat by such a selection from the plagues of the universe.—“ What an extraordinary fancy !”

“ Yes, Mary,” said Burton, “ it is certainly eccentric ; but he is *your* uncle, my angel, and if he proposed to turn my paddock into playgrounds for a brace of elephants, I should consider it my duty to endeavour to accommodate myself to his wishes ; we will send the carriages down to the inn, and the adjutants shall have the coach-house to themselves ;—as for the rattle-snake—”

“ Hideous monster !” exclaimed Mary.

“ Curious pet,” said Burton ; “ we must take care of *him* at all events, or he will fascinate little Emma’s canary birds, and eat up Fanny’s lap-dog.”

“ Do *you* know I dread that animal more than all ?” said Mrs. Burton.

“ And in your situation, Mary,” sighed Burton,—by which we are to infer, that the said Mary was shortly expected to afford him a *third pledge* of affection—“ What is to be done, dearest ?”

“ But now really, Tom, what *are* adjutants ; and why put them into the coach-house ?” asked Mary.

“ They are birds,” said Burton.

“ Birds !” exclaimed the astonished lady, who had made up her mind to a couple of well-

dressed officers with an epaulette and strap a-piece; "if they are only birds, why not have their cage put either into our bed-chamber, or into the dressing-room?"

"Dressing-room! cage!" exclaimed Burton; "why, my dear girl, they are fourteen feet high, if they are an inch, as ravenous as tigers, and kick like donkies."

"Dear, dear!" murmured the affectionate Mary, "and the poor children, what will become of them?"

"Never mind, my little woman," said the kind husband; "we shall soon get used to them, and at all events, if we are doing our duty to an old and respected relation of your's, I shall be satisfied."

All, however, that had been anticipated, did by no means equal the reality of the arrival of these hideous animals: in less than five days appeared in a caravan, the enormous brace of birds, the coiling snake, seven Cashmire goats, a Cape jackass, imagined by Mr. Danvers to be a zebra, because so called by Mr. Vilette, four monkies "of sorts," and a couple of grey parrots, with shrill voices and *excellent lungs*.

Such a scene was never represented at Sandown cottage as was enacted on this extraor

dinary day; for strange as were the adjutants, horrible as was the snake, odious as were the monkies, uncouth as were the goats, and noisy as were the parrots,—the kitmagars, and coolies, superintended by Mr. Rice, the nabob's own man, were, to the quiet European establishment assembled, more horrible, more strange, more odious, more uncouth, and more noisy.

First the birds were to be fed—a rabbit or two were to be caught for the rattle-snake—failing of which, a fine fowl ready prepared for an excellent *entrée* at dinner was hastily applied to the purpose. A charming portion of bread and milk just ready for Miss Fanny's supper was whipped up for the parrots; the zebra took fright at the goats, and broke loose into the kitchen-garden, while one of the monkies in search of provender, skipped over the head of a maid-servant, who was standing at the hall-door with the younger daughter of the family in her arms, and having nearly knocked down both nurse and child, whisked up stairs, and hid itself under one of the beds in the nursery.

Such screamings, such pokings and scratchings with brooms and brushes, such squall-

ings of children, such roarings of gardeners and keepers, such agonies of the terrified mother, such horrors of the agitated husband, such squallings of babes, such chattering of servants, in Malabar, Hindostanee, Cingalese, and every other jumbled language of the East, never were seen or heard; and it was near nine o'clock before Jackoo was secured, on the pinnacle of the best bed-room chimney-pot, and carried down to his proper lodging, amongst the other beauties of Nature, or that peace was restored in the house, or dinner ready for the family.

“ Well, my angel,” said Burton, as he sipped his wine; “ it is all over now—how calm and comfortable every thing seems—one really should occasionally suffer a few little inconveniences, to render the even tenour of our life the more agreeable.”

“ I care nothing for the noise, it is rather good fun,” said Mary; “ only I am worried to death about the children. I really do not see what's to be done.”

“ My sweet girl,” replied the affectionate Burton, “ every care will be taken of these animals, the men are here expressly for the purpose: and no danger can possibly accrue.”

At this moment a most terrific noise was heard in the ante-room, and a maid-servant, pale with terror, rushed into the dinner-parlour without the smallest ceremony or preparation, and exclaimed in a shrill tone—
“Ma’am, Ma’am, his leg is broken!”

“Whose leg?” said Mrs. Burton, somewhat philosophically; recollecting that the only *he* for whom she cared in the world had not been in harm’s way, but was sitting opposite to her, with both his legs snug and safe under the dinner-table.

“The gardener, Ma’am, Thomas, the——”

“How, when, where?” exclaimed Burton.

“You shall hear immediately, Sir,” said Mr. Rice, *chargé d’affaires* of Mr. Danvers, who entered the apartment, attended by the kitmagar, not so much to explain the accident as to complain of the conduct of the gardener, who, anxious to ascertain the manner in which birds four yards and a half high contrive to roost at night, had ventured into their dormitory, and consequently received a kick from one of their tremendous legs, which had the effect of breaking *his*, and bringing him upon his back; after which, by his own account, the lively creature performed a sort of dance upon his chest,

which, though extremely graceful to look at, it was by no means salutary to endure.

“I will tell, you, Sir,” repeated Mr. Rice, “or perhaps Vinkitachalum will.”

“Yes, Saab,” said the kitmagar, who was actually in charge of the birds, and who was dressed in full costume, with the yellow streak of *high caste* upon his forehead. “Misser Garner come pip in de horse-house, see birds winky, winky; bird hear noise, him kick Misser Garner—because why—why because bird did not know—pretty bird—bote pretty—Saab.”

“And the man’s leg is broken?” said Burton.

“Acha, Saab — him crack in de middle—because why—why because—bird’s leg him two times strong as Misser Garner’s leg—him kill a little child two times before now, Saab.”

“Good Heavens !” exclaimed Mrs. Burton, whose maternal feelings were roused by this horrible precedent for the quiet commission of infanticide.

“But we must see about the gardener,” said Burton; “desire them to send the carriage immediately for Mr. Kilman, and——

“The carriages have been removed, Sir,” said the butler, “to make room for the birds.”

“ Well, then, let horses be sent, and beg Mr. Kilman immediately to come and attend the poor fellow, who is doubtless suffering torment from the accident.”

“ I don’t think it is extremely painful, Sir,” said Mr. Rice, with infinite composure ; “ for on the voyage I met with a similar accident from one of my master’s Cashmire goats, and it really is more in idea than in reality.”

“ Oh ! those goats,” groaned Mrs. Burton, at the top of the table, in an under-tone, inaudible below the salt.

“ Well, well, at all events, send off,” said Burton ; “ and take care that nobody disturbs the birds again, or goes near them ; without some very strict caution we shall have more accidents, depend upon it.”

The domestics retired, all discontented in the highest degree ; Rice thought that sufficient respect was not paid him—he could only get tallow-candles and port wine in the butler’s-room, which had such an effect upon his feelings, that he resolved to proceed to his master at Cheltenham the next day. Vin-kitachalum thought it cruel to complain of his birds merely for breaking a man’s leg ; endeavouring at the same time, with all the elo-

quence of Orientalism, to prove that so far from complaining at the fracture of his limb, he ought, if he had a spark of gratitude in his composition, to have returned thanks to Heaven that his life had been spared under the circumstances.

On the other hand—so differently do different people estimate the same thing—the agitated spider-brusher, who had first rushed into the room, thought that the bird ought instantly to be killed for hurting her sweetheart, and felt that sending for only one doctor to set his leg was a mark of excessive cruelty; while the butler, who cared more for the regularity of the service than any thing else, joined with the cook in execrating both men and things which could have conduced to leave a second course chilling upon the table, and have obviated the necessity of uncorking a second bottle of claret.

Peace, however, was again restored; Mr. Kilman in due time arrived, the fracture was reduced, and so far all went well; except, indeed, that the gardener had been hired by Burton at enormous wages, from his knowledge of pineries, for the express purpose of producing, if possible, finer, larger, and hea-

vier fruit than his Grace the neighbouring Duke; and that the two months' confinement, consequent upon the kick, put an end to all hopes of aid from him in the pursuit; while prudence, on the other hand, dictated that a second scientific gardener exclusively to superintend pine-apples would be too expensive. After a short deliberation, the pines were therefore for the present season abandoned, and Mr. and Mrs. Burton obliged to satisfy themselves with the prospect of what *might* be *done* in another.

When the morning arrived, Burton and his wife, as was their constant custom, and is indeed a constant custom with the generality of families, proceeded to the breakfast-parlour, a room opening into one of the gayest and prettiest flower-gardens in the county; all the varied specimens of the hardy tribes vied with each other, and dazzled the eye while they charmed the other senses. It was a little Paradise, and never did it look brighter and prettier than on this morning: the tea was excellent, the coffee perfect, the rolls admirable; the birds were singing; the sun shining—all Nature seemed gay; when suddenly the astonished couple perceived the three Indian ser-

vants of their beloved uncle, armed with sticks, rushing through one of the thickest parterres, trampling down all the sweet and gaudy flowers, slapping and banging at every thing they approached; and making a noise with their voices, as nearly resembling that made by Guinea hens in a state of alarm as possible.

“What the deuce has happened now?” cried Burton.

“Mercy on us! look at the roses; see the beautiful magnolias!” and at that moment down went a stage of poor innocent greenhouse plants, which had been drawn out like a volunteer corps in all their splendour to be reviewed in the fine weather.

“What are ye doing?” bawled Burton to the men. “Che, che, che, che, che, che,” went the Indians, totally regardless of all he said to them.

“What do ye want, what are ye hunting for?” exclaimed the astonished Lady. “Che, che, che, che, che, che,” replied the zealous invaders.

At length Burton, out of patience at beholding the wreck of all his rural beauties, rang the bell, and caused enquiries to be made in every quarter, as to the cause of such ap-

parently unprovoked outrage; when after great delay, and mystery, and confusion, and backwardness, on the part of all the subordinates, the truth was confessed. During the night, the superb rattle-snake had escaped from his cage, and could no where be found.

“And the children are out!” screamed Mrs. Burton.

“What’s to be done?” inquired Burton eagerly of Mr. Rice.

“We must find the snake, Sir.”

“Find him! let us endeavour to destroy him.”

“Destroy! Sir,” said the man,—“I would not do it for the universe. It is more than my place is worth barely to encourage such an idea.—Why, Sir, there was a young gentleman, a cousin, I believe, of my master’s, to whom it was supposed at one time he would leave all his property; and merely because he happened to say, (saving your presence, Ma’am,) ‘d—the snake!’ my master desired him to quit his house, and has never seen or spoken to him since.”

“Oh,” said Mrs. Burton, considerably staggered by this avowed affection on the part of her uncle for the reptile, and even more by the decided manner in which he resented any

affront offered to it—"I see no harm in a snake; a snake in its proper place is a very curious and beautiful creature, but not loose in a garden with children."

"I don't think, Ma'am, there is *much* danger," said Rice, calculatingly and philosophically; "perhaps, if he is not voracious this morning, he won't touch 'em—his appetite is very uncertain."

Perhaps!—the thought, the doubt, the possibility, was madness!—The agitated mother rushed out in hopes to save her offspring, regardless of all danger—of all difficulty.

Burton with equal anxiety followed, and by instinct, as it were, armed himself with a double-barrelled gun and joined in the pursuit: his feelings were in a perfect whirl, and he determined within himself, if he found the creature, not merely to scotch, but kill him, at all hazards.

Scouts were despatched in every direction; and it having been given out as a point of natural history, by Vinkitachalum, that the reptile was extremely fond of flowers; every bed, every clump and cluster where flowers could grow were trampled over, and beaten down, and destroyed in the search, but all in vain.

At a turn in the shrubbery, Burton at length beheld one of the nursery-maids and his children: the woman was seated on a bench, with the younger one in her arms—the elder, then just two years old, was within a few yards of her. Delighted at the sight, he called to his little darling, but she answered not; she appeared not to hear him—her innocent countenance seemed fixed upon some object apparently close to her—her whole attention was evidently absorbed; instead of turning to run, as she was wont to do, towards her anxious father, she heeded him not, but stepped slowly, with a subdued manner and marked caution, unnatural at her age, towards a cluster of shrubs which were near her. Burton cast a glance towards the spot, and beheld coiled into a circle with its head considerably elevated, the dreaded rattle-snake itself!

Its flaming eyes, sparkling like diamonds, were fixed upon his beloved child, who, under the power of their horrid fascination, was every moment involuntarily drawing nearer and nearer to its venomous mouth.—The nurse at the same moment saw the same object; and, although ignorant of the dreaded power of the creature, was paralyzed.

Burton approached with breathless trepidation ; again he called his infant—it was, alas, too late ! The rattle of the snake caught his ear—the child was closer—to fire at the reptile was, in all probability, to destroy his offspring. He feared not for himself, but ignorant of the character of his foe, he dreaded lest, by advancing, he might end the scene, and hasten the destruction of his child :—the leaves moved—the snake uncoiled itself—elevated its head—the rattling increased—the innocent babe sank on the grass, within a foot of it—the creature made another movement preparatory to the blow, when Mary, in an instant, dashed before her husband, and snatched her infant from the jaws of death. Her rapid approach startled the monster, whose eye was suddenly diverted from its victim ; and setting up a tremendous rattle with its tail, it bounded through the thicket, and was out of sight in a moment.

Those only who have children, can sympathize with my hero and heroine at this moment ; Mary hardly knew the danger to which she had exposed herself and her infant, by this bold attack of the enemy ; but the

torrent of her feelings at the child's escape was too much for her to bear; offering a prayer of gratitude to Heaven, she gave her precious charge into its father's arms, and fainted at his feet. Assistance was immediately sought and procured; but the delicacy of her situation rendered the event more perilous than at first was apprehended, and she had nearly fallen a victim to her intrepidity and maternal love, in giving birth the same evening to a fine boy. This was the object of all Burton's ambition, the theme of his prayers, the desire of his heart; but such was the force of the morning's agitation, that the infant, alas! was *still-born*!

The search for the hated snake was kept up with laudible assiduity by the attendants during the day, and at last he was found in a state of torpor, having contrived, by dint of his insinuating looks, to gorge himself with the valuable contents of Mrs. Burton's aviary.

Burton resolved, cost what it might, to be rid of this horrid creature, and gave his opinion pretty freely on the subject to Mr. Rice; who, finding the ground untenable, caused the reptile to be removed to the neighbouring town, where, having a cooley specially ap-

pointed to attend him, he might lead a quiet life till the actual arrival of Mr. Frumpton Danvers at Sandown, which event happened in the first week of June; it having been arranged that Mrs. Burton's recovery should be the signal for the old gentleman's approach.

The intervening month had passed much as such months pass in families; and the quietude of the house was seldom disturbed, except by the occasional invasion of one or two of the Cashmires into the drawing-room, to the imminent danger of jars, busts, and looking-glasses, or a temporary elopement of one of the adjutants to a distant part of the county. These evils, however, were removed, and the nuisance abated, by a discovery made on the part of Mr. Danvers, that his snake had been exiled: partly in revenge for this slight, and partly with a view to carry a somewhat important point of his own, he determined upon the strange, and with him somewhat unusual, measure of *giving* his rare specimens of natural history to a lady of high rank, who had happened to express in his hearing an affection for such curiosities.

Mr. Danvers had a vulgar mind, and igno-

rant of the ways of more refined society, fondly imagined that paying a deference to the wife of a great man was a certain mode of obtaining the consideration of her husband: whether his gross view of the thing were correct or not I do not pretend to know; but most true it is, that, vastly to the relief of the Burtons, the menagerie was by special order removed from Sandown, much in the order it arrived, after having, by its temporary stay there, blighted our hero's fondest hopes—endangered his darling child and its exemplary mother—lamed his gardener for life—exterminated his aviary—and completely destroyed his flower-garden.

Still resolved to keep on “never minding;” conscious of possessing every earthly comfort within themselves, they looked forward to the day when they might, by the most assiduous attention to Mr. Danvers himself, obliterate from his mind any unpleasant recollections of neglect towards his animals; and Mrs. Burton, with the before-mentioned miniature in her hand, almost longed for the time when she might welcome her handsome uncle with the salmon-coloured frogs and the pink-tied tail.

In due time the day of his arrival came, and the hours after breakfast seemed to creep instead of flying, till five o'clock; shortly after which a carriage drove to the door, followed by a hack-chaise and pair.

In the first vehicle sat Mr. Frumpton Danvers himself, attended by his own man, Rice; on the dicky were two Indian servants *en costume*. The top of the carriage was crowned with an imperial, the back of it encumbered by two large trunks. The chaise contained an incalculable quantity of luggage, and an English livery-servant, who was completely wedged in by the requisite *etceteras* for a person of Mr. Danvers's habits and standing.

Mary's heart beat, and she was puzzling herself as to how far she might go with propriety towards warmly receiving so handsome a relative, when the drawing-room door opened, and leaning upon Burton's arm (who had gone out to receive him,) appeared the object of all her speculations.

She beheld an old man, considerably bent by years, with yellow cheeks, white lips, and black teeth;—a few grey hairs strayed around his head, having escaped the confinement of a

minute pigtail, which stuck over his shoulder just under his left ear. He was dressed in a blue coat, with a bilious-looking double-breasted calico waistcoat, pale nankeen breeches, saffron-coloured silk stockings, professing to be white, and a pair of little nankeen gaiters over shoes, with buckles in them: he was, in short, a very fair specimen of that class of returned qui-hi's; individuals of which may be seen any fine spring day, trying to weather the windy corner of Cavendish Square; but as completely different from what Mary had fancied, as his manner was from what she had hoped.

“Well, Ma’am,” said the old gentleman, gently pushing her away from him, she having, in the ardour of her feelings, rushed into his arms; “well, Ma’am, and how d’ ye do, eh—pretty well?—Why, Ma’am, you are not so tall as I expected—your mother sent me your picture—cursed humbugs those painting fellows—eh?”

Mary recollected the picture of the beau with the bouquet, and felt half inclined to join in the censure which the old gentleman thus levelled at the artists.

“So, Ma’am,” said he, “you did not like

my snake, I hear, eh ! nor those beautiful birds I sent you."

Unprepared for an attack at the moment of his arrival, Mary hesitated for an answer.

" I don't care, Ma'am ; you need not try to make a speech ; I did not want you to have 'em ; I hope my people paid for their keep ; it shews what fools there are in the world ; I meant them to have been *your's* : now I 've given 'em away to somebody else ; it don't matter, I dare say, to you ; some people don't like snakes ; there's no accounting for taste, eh ? "

" My mother, Sir," said Mary —

" Ah, your mother was a fool, and I dare say you 're not much better ! I always told her so ; —she had a very great respect for my opinions."

" Why, Sir ! " said Burton, —

" Oh don't make a fuss, Sir ; when you know me longer, you 'll know me better, perhaps : I don't care a cowrie for the snakes—never did—did not know what to do with 'em, or I shouldn't have thought of giving them to you—there 's an end of that. Well,—isn't your name Mary, eh ? "

" It is, Sir."

" So you have had a dead child, Mary, eh ? —great nonsense that, Ma'am—Rice told me

a rigmarole about *my* snake; what had *my* snake to do with *your* child, eh?"

Mary was overcome with the extraordinary abruptness of Mr. Danvers: and Burton seeing that she *was* so, caught up the conversation, by remarking that one of his children had nearly been destroyed by it.

"Stuff!—I don't believe a syllable of it; all trash—gammon—like the story of the squirrel in the Gentleman's Magazine, or the lie of Nic Scull, the surveyor ——"

"Dr. Mead believed in the power, Sir, and I ——"

"And who the deuce, Sir, was Dr. Mead? and why the deuce, Sir, should Dr. Mead know more about the matter than you or I? What does it signify? Don't let us talk about it—eh?—Snug house you have got;—deuced bad all these jigamaree ornaments, eh?—hired it so, I suppose, eh?"

"No, Sir, my own taste; I ——"

"Oh, my! you've got a taste—eh! and a genius, I suppose, eh, Miss Minikin?"—patting Mrs. Burton under the chin.

"We are satisfied, Sir," said Mary; "contentment is itself a treasure."

“ So it is, my little preacher,” said Danvers ;
“ but how do you pass your time, eh ? I don’t
see any card-tables ; have you got a billiard
room, eh ? ”

“ No,” said Burton ; “ Sir, we play no cards.”

“ No cards ! then I ’m off— I ’m off ; I
meant to have staid six weeks with you, but I
could as soon live without smoking as without
cards.”

“ Smoking ! ” mentally ejaculated Mrs. Bur-
ton.

I use this expression because I have found it
in every novel which has been published for
the last ten years—barring those splendid ex-
ceptions to all modern novels, Sir Walter
Scott’s ;—I do not profess to understand it,
but I imagine it to mean an ejaculation which
is not intended to be ejaculated, and which
therefore is no ejaculation at all.

“ Oh ! ” replied the master of the house, “ we
can easily make up a party for you at whist, Sir.”

“ That will do,” said Danvers, “ that will
do ; then I am your man for a month at least ;
however, I ’ll just change my dress—what time
did you dine to-day, eh ? ”

“ We have not dined yet, Sir,” said Mary,

“ Yet !” why it’s near six o’clock, woman ; what d’ ye mean, Ma’am, eh ?”

“ What hour, then, do you prefer, Sir ?” said Mary.

“ I always dine at three, Ma’am, or not at all. I never eat tiffin, and nothing will induce me to alter my dinner-hour : I don’t care a fig for fashion—they spoiled Calcutta by dining at night ; night, Ma’am, is meant for playing cards—not for eating.”

“ Oh, we shall regulate our hours by your wishes, Sir,” said Burton ; “ and I have no doubt when we know your habits, you will find every thing smooth and comfortable.”

“ You are very kind, Sir,” said Danvers.—“ Pray, Mr. Burton, who was your father, eh ?”

“ He held an office under Government in Scotland, Sir.”

“ What one of their infernal jobs, eh ? he was a respectable man, wasn’t he, eh ?”

“ He was an excellent man—a man of——”

“ Hold your tongue, Sir ; don’t bore me with his goodness ; all sons’ fathers are excellent : gammon—trash—can’t humbug me—I don’t care what he was,—I suppose he’s dead, isn’t he, eh ?”

“ He is, Sir.”

“Any more of ye?”

“I had a sister, Sir, who married an officer in the army: he was killed at Waterloo.”

“Serve him right,” said the old gentleman; “stupid ass he must have been to have gone there:—what became of his widow, eh?”

“She died, Sir,—about four years since,” said Burton, with tears in his eyes.

“I’m glad of it, poor body!—out of her misery, eh? Did she get her husband’s medal, eh?”

“I really don’t know, Sir.”

“She ought to have got it, you know, according to regulation; isn’t your name Tom, eh?”

“It is, Sir.”

“Well then, Tom, come, show me my room, I’ll just change my clothes, and be down again in no time: and go you, Miss Polly,” added the old gentleman, addressing his niece, “and get cards ready, eh? You’ll find me out by and by, eh, Polly?”

Saying which he left the library, followed by Burton, who first pointing the way, attended him to his chamber-door. As they went upstairs, the nabob stopped on the first landing-

place, and holding by the banisters, turned round to Burton and said, "I say, Master Tom, your wife is no beauty, I can tell you that—eh?"

Burton, who from the force of habit had brought himself to fancy his wife perfection, received this intelligence with as much good-nature as could be expected, and left his guest in his room, pitying his eyes, or his taste, or whatever it was, that had deceived him so egregiously with respect to his niece.

Burton, when he returned to Mary, was a good deal puzzled how to act: he had pledged himself to cards, and certain it was that Kilman was expected at dinner; but the hour for that meal not having arrived, and Mr. Kilman being in his own person incompetent to take two hands at whist, and Mary having as much idea of the game as she had of Hebrew, he could not imagine what was to be done. He calculated that he and his wife might play together, and that her blunders would escape scolding; but then he recollected that her uncle played high, so that the treat would be extremely expensive; and quite in a puzzle what to do, he determined to get dinner over as quickly as pos-

sible, and trust to chance, always reserving to himself the opinion which Mr. Danvers had been pleased to express upon the subject of his niece's personal attractions.

Mr. Kilman arrived; Mr. Danvers came down; Mrs. Burton appeared dressed for dinner, and so did Burton.

"What an infernal smell of cooking!" said Mr. Danvers, "oh! your dinner I suppose:—well, to be sure, it is a strange fancy to dine at such an hour as this; however, I hate to be unsociable, so I'll e'en sit and look at you, while you eat, eh?" Saying which, without the smallest ceremony he rang the bell.

"Tell Rice," said the old gentleman to the servant who arrived to answer it, "to send Swangee here, with my canisters and boxes. If you'll give me leave, Miss Polly, while you are feasting yourselves, I'll just whiff away some of the weed—nobody need mind *me*: I hate being a restraint upon any body."

Saying which, and dinner being announced, he led his niece to her seat at table, and placing himself next her, but a little retired from the board, was served with a pipe well charged with tobacco: which being lighted,

he proceeded to smoke, as his companions went on eating, performing his fumatory recreation in the most free and easy manner, and all its concomitant evolutions with the most perfect *nonchalance*.

In a short time every thing in the room smelt or tasted of tobacco; for Danvers, although long a resident in India, disdained the hookah, or the chirout: the apartment was in a mist — Mrs. Burton coughed, so did Mr. Kilman, so did Tom, so did the Butler, so did the footman—all to no purpose, Mr. Danvers only moved his pipe from his mouth, to ask for some *gin and water*.

Lamentable distress! such a liquor was not to be had; in vain were tendered the Grave, the Hock, the Chateau Margaut, the Pacchareti, the Maraschino, the Curaçoa, and every thing else in wine or *liqueur* “worthy the attention of the curious.” Brandy and water, however, was the only succedaneum; which was received by the venerable smoker with no very good grace.

Poor Mrs. Burton, anxious as she was to do her duty, and evince her attachment, could not long endure the fumigation so liberally

afforded by her eccentric relation, and retired to the drawing-room, where subsequently the important rubber was arranged, and the whole affair went off admirably, till Mr. Kilman, who was the old gentleman's partner, happening in a fit of absence, or from ignorance, to trump his "thirteenth," the ire of the nabob rose to an ungovernable pitch, and, while the cards were scattered in every direction by his fury, the words quack—pill-gilder—fool—ass—and even beast—flowed from his lips in a torrent of invective.

The apothecary, unaccustomed to such rough usage, was about to remonstrate in a less gentle manner than ordinary; but assuaged by the emollient language of his host, who pleaded the age and peculiarities of his wife's uncle, and compensated to the injured man by descanting on the excellence of the old gentleman's heart, he submitted to the vituperation, and, after the storm blew over, accepted an invitation for the next day.

The following morning Mr. Danvers discovered that he could not bear the fatigue of mounting and remounting stairs, and therefore suggested that a bed should be put up for him

in one of the rooms on the ground-floor, which was no sooner hinted at, than his desire was gratified; upholsterers arrived from the neighbouring town, and in the course of the morning what had heretofore been the pretty favourite breakfast-parlour, was converted into a bed-chamber for the eccentric visitor.

These little inconveniences were all borne with pleasure by Mrs. Burton; and the quarrels between the servants of her guest and those of the establishment, which occurred daily and hourly, were arranged and re-arranged, with as much justice as appeared to her consistent with the deference she thought due to the enormously rich man, who had graciously condescended to make her and her whole family uncomfortable.

All the people in the neighbourhood, of whom the Burtons had hitherto fought shy, were necessarily invited by turns, in order to make up Mr. Danvers' whist; for after invitations had once or twice been sent to the men only of the vicinity to effect this great purpose, it became essential, for civility's sake, to include the ladies of their families, by which unavoidable measure, Mrs. Burton,

who did not care for any society besides that of her husband and children, was night after night bored with all the odd wives and daughters of all the odd persons who formed the card-table; and what made the thing more difficult to arrange was, the fact that very few of the people who had unfortunately played *with* Mr. Danvers once, would submit to the operation a second time; so that a circle of twice the extent would not have been adequate to supply the demand for whisters, fresh and fresh as they were wanted.

In short, the whole house and establishment were disarranged. The poor dear children, who ordinarily formed a part of the domestic circle, were as strictly confined to the nursery during the stay of their great great uncle, as if his superb snake had been a sojourner among them. All the little *agrémens* of Burton's retirement were suspended, and the whole neighbourhood was influenced by the change; for, as all the persons invited were forced to sit down to dinner at three o'clock, a consequent revolution took place in every establishment connected nearly or remotely with the affairs of Sandown Cottage.

Mutable, however, are the affairs of this world ; and nobody, I suspect, could have anticipated the result of our uncle's visit to Somersetshire : it is mine, however, to tell it. —Among the component parts of the female society assembled for his recreation, the two Misses Podgers shone conspicuous in finery, noise, and vulgarity ; they were attendant nymphs on their father, a retired Plymouth slop-seller ; and the truth was—and between the reader and me, truth must be told—that Miss Sally Podgers, the younger of the two, had determined very shortly after her introduction to old Mr. Danvers, to use her best endeavours to become the prop of his declining years—the mistress of his house, his heart, and his fortunes.

There was an obstacle, it is true, which lay in her path to preferment—she had more than half accepted, as a husband, an officer who had been some time quartered in the neighbourhood ; but inconstancy was a trifle compared with the brilliant prospects which opened to her view, and, as if a decided measure were too much for her, she temporized with the affair, and it is said, (how truly I know not, for I

was not her confessor,) that she did not meet with any violent repulse on the part of her lover, when she proposed to unite herself to his aged rival in the first instance, in order that hereafter they might jointly reap the advantages of the marriage.

“There is no fool like the old one,” says the proverb, and certain it is, that Mr. Danvers was pleased, soothed, and flattered by the marked attentions of Miss Sally. His whist was not a *sine quâ non* with him, as it had been heretofore—he, who had always hated music, would complacently listen to Miss Sally’s singing, and even volunteered to dine with her father at his house—a condescension almost unparalleled in the annals of his history.

Burton and his wife were stricken by the forward airs of particular attention towards their uncle which were assumed by Miss Sally; but the idea of a serious attachment, or rather of serious consequences arising from such an attachment, never entered their heads; and when Danvers told them that he *really* meant to dine with his excellent friend Podgers the following day, they saw nothing in the measure but extraordinary good-nature, which they

attributed to a desire on the part of the old gentleman to make the *amende honorable* for having called the same respectable person a stupid old jackass, at the card-table the night before. Little did they imagine that on this very day, warmed with the old slop-seller's hot gin-punch—a liquor to which the nabob was overmuch addicted, the blow was to be struck that was to decide their hopes and crush their expectations. Little did they imagine that their heir had been lost, their child endangered, their gardener lamed, their aviary despoiled, and their garden, as well as all their comforts for six weeks, destroyed—for nothing!—but so it was, and the next morning the old gentleman reported progress in the following terms:—

“Well, Master Burton,” said he, “I suppose you and Miss Polly here are pretty well tired of me by this time, eh?”

“Oh! my dear uncle,” said Mrs. Burton, “we ——”

“No gammon: I know human nature: it is not for what he is, but what he has, that an old fellow like me is petted and fêted by his relations, eh? D’ye understand? umph!”

Mr. and Mrs. Burton certainly did understand, but it was a difficult question to answer.

“I hope, Sir,” said Burton, recovering from his surprise at the address, and reddening a little as he spoke, “I hope, Sir, there *are* such things as disinterested attachment.”

“I believe there are, Master Tom,” replied Danvers, “but not in family connexions: a young woman who falls in love for the first time is disinterested, perhaps; and as I was saying to my friend Podgers, last night—but no matter—no matter;—you’ll know what I mean in time: I’m off to London to-day, Tom; that’s the upshot of the business, eh?”

“To a-day!” said Mary hesitatingly.

“To-day, Ma’am! old Nick himself shall not stop me, nor you neither, Ma’am, and that’s more.”

“It is somewhat sudden, Sir,” said Burton; “I trust we have not done any thing disagreeable to you.”

“No,” said Danvers, in a manner different from his usual style of reply; “you have done every thing to please me—every thing to gratify me.”

“What *has* occurred, uncle?” inquired Mary.

“Oh, curse it, Ma’am, you’ll know in time;

don't be in such a hurry; you'll be surprised when you do, however.—You'll find out, my lady, that an old man is not quite such a bore as some people think, eh?"

And at the conclusion of this speech, the strange being cast his eyes to the looking-glass, and with more than ordinary care pushed back his favourite little grey pigtail from his shoulder to its proper place at his back.

"I am afraid the children have disturbed you, Sir," said Mrs. Burton.

"Not they, dear little things! I love children—delight in 'em. Perhaps—I may have some of my own soon—eh?"

A dead pause ensued: the happy couple looked at each other.

"Ring the bell, my love," said Mary to her husband.

"Ring the bell," repeated Danvers, "Ha! ha! ha!—that's me—Ha! ha! I am going to *ring* the *belle*—thank you, Polly; deuced good, eh?"

This most extraordinary explosion of a wretched pun lost its point, from its application not having been perfectly understood

by the auditory. It evidently tickled the antiquated swain, who continued alternately chuckling in an under-tone, and looking sideways at himself in the looking-glass.

Most true it is, that in women there is an intuitive perception in matters of love, which does not exist in men, and Mary, though simple enough to be quite charming, saw with a glance, as transient as those which her uncle cast at himself, that something had occurred, in which the blind and fanciful god had busied himself. The idea seemed absurd ; and if she had mentioned it to her husband, he would have called her a simpleton, and there the matter would have ended ; but Rice, entering at the moment, and delivering a note folded up " corner-wise " to the old gentleman, to which he considered it, as it appeared, imperatively necessary to return an immediate answer, Burton's attention was excited ; and when, leaning on his man's arm, Mr. Danvers retired into the adjoining room (his present bedchamber) to write a reply, our hero looked at his wife, as if expecting some remark upon the subject.

A servant was clearing away the breakfast-

table, which, although it hindered his mistress from making any such remark, gave her a favourable opportunity of inquiring who brought the note for her uncle.

“A servant from Mr. Podgers’s, Ma’am,” was the answer.

Oh, what a light burst upon Mary’s mind at that moment!—the thousand “trifles light as air,” which were collected together as “confirmations” of her suspicions; every look, every word, every song, every smile that Miss Sally Podgers had, with such apparent good humour and agreeableness bestowed upon the old gentleman, passed before her like Banquo’s king’s; and the last, connected as it was with handing down a line of heirs to “push her from her stool,” was indeed a horrible vision.

The instant the servant left the room, she communicated her suspicions to Burton, who laughed at the notion: she argued upon all the minutiae which had caught her observation, and now recurred to her mind; and, after descanting and detailing for a quarter of an hour, Burton felt just so much of the justice of her remarks, as led him to regret, more than ordinarily he was accustomed to do, the

state of his garden and gardener, the emptiness of his aviary, and the loss of his son—a loss which, by the way, it appeared that his excellent wife had just ascertained the probability of repairing.

Their meditations and schemings were, however, terminated by the return of the object of their anxiety to the room, who, on his appearance, announced to his host and hostess that he had ordered his carriage at one.

“What, positively, Sir?” said Mary.

“Fixed as fate, Ma’am, I assure you. I shall first go to London, and then—it won’t so much depend upon me afterwards.”

Mrs. Burton had too much of the woman about her to let the matter rest here.

“Upon whom then?” asked she archly.

“Upon one, Ma’am, whose opinions I shall then be bound to consider.”

“Indeed!”

“Yes, indeed, faith! I don’t know what’s the use of mincing matters;—I’m going to be married.—There now,—what do you think o’ that? Perhaps, if you had had a boy, I might have adopted him, but you hav’n’t, you know, eh?”

Mrs. Burton thought of the probability that she might have one soon, and Burton recurred to the rattle-snake.

“Married, Sir?” said he.

“Married—ah married! didn’t you marry, Sir?—Why shouldn’t I marry, Sir, eh?”

“Oh, certainly; only——only——”

“Only you think *my* children will put your noses out of joint. You think I’m not up to you, my fine fellow:—mark me, Sir, I’ll never leave my property to a hare-brained scattering spendthrift like you, Sir. Why, since I’ve been here, half the county have been to visit you; nothing but gambling, and the deuce knows what, in the house; you’d run through the national debt if you had it.”

This was the “unkindest stab of all.” To be reproached with the very excesses they had committed merely to amuse *him*, was more than they expected.

“Then your children, instead of attending to them, there they are, poked up in the nursery like rabbits in a hutch, while their Mamma is flirting and faddling about like a boarding-school Miss.”

“My dear Sir, the children were merely

kept out of the way for fear of disturbing you."

"Stuff! — I don't believe a word of it, Ma'am; humbug!—nobody so fond of children as me: no, they make mothers look old, and it's vulgar to seem affectionate, eh?"

"As for our parties, Sir," said Burton, "we seldom saw any company till you arrived; and then merely to make up your whist-table."

"Indeed, then why did not you get people to play, who knew the game—eh? Beasts, asses, every one of them, except my friend Podgers—a capital fellow that."

"And pray, uncle," said Mrs. Burton, with a smile as unperturbed as under the circumstances a smile of hers could be, "who is the happy object of your choice?—nobody in our neighbourhood, I suppose?"

"*You* suppose!—well then, Ma'am, you suppose very wrong, for it is somebody in your neighbourhood—a most exemplary girl; with excellent abilities, and no nonsense."

"I can't imagine," said Burton ———

"That won't do, Tom; you know as well as I do, so does Polly there; but you won't

drive me from my purpose: the deed is done, and I shall be made happy by the disinterested affection of a young woman, who really loves me for myself alone."

"Upon my word," said Mary, "you must allow me——"

"Oh! you fancy that impossible, do you?—Pretty well, I thank you: now you *have* done it—you *have* let the cat out of the bag—shewn yourself.—Nice world indeed! dutiful niece!—excellent family—to yourselves! Thank God here is the carriage! I wash my hands of the whole affair, Ma'am:—I have not forgot the abuse you set up against Miss Sally Podgers, the night before last;—a girl worth ten of my own stupid relations. I forgive you, but I can't forget what has happened: I have no objection to shake hands with you at parting, nor with you, Tom; but you have thrown off the mask just in time.—Nobody can love *me*, I suppose, eh? Your stupid mother had always a notion about old men;—stuff—nonsense! I say,—I won't have dead children at any rate; umph! you understand me—eh? I'm off; open the door; good-bye, he, he! old fool am I, eh?"

And continuing this sort of running-fire of words, the old gentleman stepped into his carriage, attended, as usual, by Rice ; and shaking Burton's hand as if nothing had happened, drove off to London, and as he fancied to happiness.

When Burton returned to the drawing-room, he found Mary in tears, with her head reclined on the table, suffering under the effects of grief, disappointment, anger, disgust, and several other little feelings or passions, which should have been utter strangers to a heart so gentle and so kind as hers : but it certainly *was* provoking to have made every effort, strained every nerve, and endured every inconvenience for the mere disinterested pleasure of shewing attachment to an old relation, and then to find the very measures adopted to evince that feeling in the strongest possible manner made matters of accusation against herself and her husband, and apparently the groundwork of a separation from that very relative, which had taken place under circumstances the most annoying and irritating.

Of all the neighbours within miles of Sandown, none were so particularly disagreeable

to Mrs. Burton, as the family with whom her intimate connexion now appeared inevitable.— Old Podgers was a man who sprang *literally* from the lowest class of life; but, uneducated and uncivilized as he was, he had realized a fortune and retired to the county of Somerset. His daughters were both perfect gorgons of ugliness; they had for years been flirting butts for the subalterns of marching regiments occasionally quartered at the barracks, and made up, in the way of attraction, for a want of beauty, by a half-improper levity of conduct, which, at least, excited remark, and made them more conspicuous, and consequently more sought, than they otherwise would have been, by the lieutenants and ensigns, who felt themselves, after the duties of the mess-table, more at their ease in such company, than in that of any other young women still suffered to mix in decent society.

It is most true that such girls, if they have a tolerable share of intellect, make their way extremely well, and by dint of snappish remarks, expressive eyes, an apt comprehen-

sion of what they should by no means understand, and an off-hand freedom of manner, contrive to attract, and even for a time attach, the regards of certain dangling idlers who scorn the amiable labour of thawing icy hearts, or the more arduous task of keeping up the ball with an intellectual female; but it is equally true, that, in precisely the same proportion as such women stand favourably with the other sex, they descend in the estimation of their own: and the long dissertation with which Mrs. Burton indulged herself and her husband upon the character and qualities of Miss Sally, was concluded by her setting the young lady down as an extremely forward, pert, ill-mannered, ill favoured, underbred person.

“ Well, my love,” said Burton, “ we should content ourselves with that, which as I conceive, cannot fail to content every human being: we have done our duty, and as the disposal of events is not in our power, so it becomes us not to repine. As far as worldly matters go, we are quite well without any accession of fortune; and if it appear likely

that your uncle will be more happy *with* a wife than *without* one, ——”

“A wife!” interrupted the usually placid Mary, “a wife! if he want one, let him have one, but surely not Miss Sally Podgers; a person only tolerated in society. Is not there Emma Smith, or Maria Harding, or one of the Havards, or the Ellises,—any of them would have been better suited to him, than an upstart, pert ——”

“Stay, stay, my angel,” said Burton, “we cannot presume to judge for others; and certainly, say what you may, your uncle is old enough to judge for himself.”

“Old enough to know better,” retorted the lady.

And in such unusual bickerings did much of that and the succeeding days pass:—still, however, the gloom of Mrs. Burton’s disappointment was cheered by her husband’s complacency, who felt that he had secured so great a treasure when he received her, that any addition would be superfluous.

Mrs. Burton’s miseries, however, had not yet reached their climax; in about a week after her uncle’s departure, the elder Miss Podgers

and Miss Midge, a dear little intimate friend of her's, called at Sandown, and partly through the negative clumsiness of the servant, who did not know whom to exclude, and partly through the active curiosity of his mistress, who, wishing to "learn the *worst*" at once, and from the best authority, did not interpose her mandate to hinder the entrance of her odious visitors to her *boudoir*, they were ushered into her presence.

There was a pert familiarity, tainted with an air of patronage, about Miss Podgers, which was intolerable to Mrs. Burton; and the face of her *aide-du-camp*, Miss Midge, was during the whole interview strained into a sort of sneering smirk, which formed a pleasing accompaniment to the vulgar *nonchalance* of her principal.

To repeat a conversation such as is likely to have been carried on by these contending ladies, would be to waste pens, paper, and patience. Suffice it to say, that from the elder visitor Mrs. Burton discovered that the marriage of her devoted uncle was actually to take place in the course of the ensuing week, and that her two informing friends were to be

bride's-maids; the principal object of their mission being to excuse the presence of Mrs. Burton or her husband, on the ground that it would be unpleasant to their feelings to attend the ceremony.

This completed all; and though Mary certainly contrived to wish her guests good-morning with something like civility, it required greater hypocrisy than she, poor soul! was mistress of, to disguise the mingled passions which were contending in her heart; and her visitors departed quite satisfied with the triumph they had gained, if not over the good-breeding, at least over the tranquillity, of their once envied victim.

A few days passed, and the ceremony which made Miss Podgers a wife, and Mr. Danvers a fool, was announced in all the papers. The vulgar Sally was metamorphosed into a blooming bride; the hideous Jane transformed, by the poetical license of the news monger, into a charming bride's-maid; and her little friend celebrated to the world as the lovely Miss Midge, with an elegant figure, and a splendid Brussels lace veil;—such is the power of money—such the force of impudence!

With this joyous ceremony, then, terminated all the fluttering hopes and nervous anxieties of the Burtons, whose indignation was not much assuaged by receiving shortly after the wedding a *cadeau de nocces* from the happy bridegroom, in the shape of a silver tea-urn, bearing the arms of Frumpton Danvers, impaled with those of Podgers; Argent, on a chevron Gules, between three Herring-tubs proper, three Sugar-loaves papered, Azure.

This really appeared to Burton adding insult to injury, and nothing but the implicit deference he always paid to the feelings of his wife, would have induced him to retain the present—it was *her* uncle who sent it, and anxious lest she should fancy that he was either disappointed or mortified by his extraordinary conduct, he went so far as to look at the urn with complacency, and even to praise the beauty of its construction.

After this event the life of Burton and his wife resumed its pristine quietude and regularity. The routine of visits consequent upon the invasion of Mr. Danvers once over, no renewals of civilities were induced, and the

happy couple enjoyed themselves, their own domestic pursuits, and the society of their children, without a care or hope beyond their own circle.

There was a perfect comfort in their union, rarely to be met with—they literally seemed to live for each other. His ardent disposition and highly-cultivated mind, his wit and vivacity, which, had he remained single, would in all probability have involved him in ten thousand scrapes and difficulties, were tempered and softened by the amenity and devotion of his dear Mary, while *her* quietude and ease of temper gained an agreeable addition of spirit, from her constant communion with a man of superior intellect and accomplishment; and, blended together, their characters and dispositions produced as much “happiness for two,” as can be enjoyed in this transitory life.

Their children grew up eminently pretty, in different styles of beauty. Emma, the eldest, was dark, with deep-brown curling hair, with eyes as bright as stars, and coral lips and snowy teeth, she was all sparkle, playfulness, and animation, all gaiety and elasticity,—the daisy itself seemed scarcely to bend its head

beneath her footstep, and her young heart was as light and as bright as her step or her eye: Fanny grew in softness and in grace,—she was fair and timid, her light hair shaded a forehead whiter than snow, her slender form appeared too delicate for the rude wind to blow upon,—she was the very contrast of her sister — all gentleness and sweetness, her manners were mild and retiring, her disposition, kind and amiable, and, though younger than the laughing Emma, her steadiness gave her an ascendancy over her sister, which, in contradiction to the avowed apophthegm that fear and love are incompatible with each other, however much it softened her character, by no means deteriorated from her affection

Three more years of happiness had elapsed, and at their termination Burton found himself the father of five daughters, each transcending the other in due order of succession, it being the fashion, more especially with mothers, to discover the greatest charms in the youngest child, so that the last and the least, is still neither the least nor the last in her “dear love.”

It was on a fine spring afternoon, after an early dinner, the carriage at the door for a drive, Mrs. Burton and three of her daughters seated, and Mr. Burton with one foot on the step of the open barouche, just pulling on his left-hand glove, that an event occurred which was doomed to work a wonderful change in the blissful scene before us. The reader does not perhaps anticipate any circumstance which could, in five minutes, cause Mrs. Burton to scream and leave the carriage, to send the children out of the barouche into the nursery, bring Mr. Burton's gloves from his hands into his coat-pocket, place the carriage in the coach-house, and the horses in the stable, and seat the happy husband at a table opposite to a smart, smug man in black, with a neatly curled brown wig upon his head, and a pair of green spectacles on his nose.

Death, relentless death! before whose unerring dart, the great, the good, the virtuous and the wise, alike must fall! Death had been busy! Mr. Frumpton Danvers was no more! In his dying moments he had desired that Mr. Burton should be sent for immediately after he had breathed his last, to be present at the opening

of his will; and this was the first communication he had made, either to his niece or her husband, since his ill-fated marriage. The Podgers' family, after that event, entirely quitted Burton's neighbourhood, having let their house and quartered themselves altogether upon the old gentleman.

The summons was like one from the grave, and was of course to be obeyed. Mrs. Burton's grief for the loss of her inconsiderate relative was hardly greater than that which she felt at a separation from her husband, for the first time since their marriage; and it was merely the feeling that it would be disrespectful to disobey the wishes of her uncle, which induced her, even in the state in which she *then* was, (for she daily expected to be confined *for the seventh time*,) to grant her consent to his travelling without her.

All circumstances considered, however, Burton decided upon starting instantly; and having ordered refreshments for his newly-arrived guest, who, as perhaps the reader may imagine, was an attorney-at-law, our hero took an affectionate leave of his tender Mary, whose heart was half-broken at his departure, and

kissing his dear little children, set off for Bath, to which place the old gentleman had gone for the benefit of his health, and died.

Heavily wore the long night in Burton's absence. Every gust of wind that rattled a shutter, appeared to Mary as if it were likely to blow over the carriage in which her husband travelled; a slight shower which fell about three o'clock in the morning was magnified by her into torrents of rain, which might flood the high road, inundate the country, and drown the post-boys; ten times during the night did she leave her bed and pat her pretty feet over the carpet, to peep through the window-curtains, that she might ascertain if it were star-light, or if there were too many clouds about to be agreeable: the step of a dog in the hall below, was converted into the approach of a gang of robbers; and the odour produced by the extinction of her own candle seized upon her affrighted sense of smelling as the effects of an incipient conflagration of Sandown Cottage and its appurtenances.

And in the midst of all this, she did not regret the loss of her uncle's fortune, she did not envy the vast possessions of his widow—

of that widow, to whose being a wife, she herself had been the principal party. She even wept that she had not seen the old man before his death, that he might have known the real state of her feelings towards him—but no more.—When she looked at her rosy-cheeked sleeping children, and thought of her absent husband, she felt that when *he* returned, she should be as happy as she wished to be on earth ;—true it is, they were all the world to her.

The eight-and-forty hours which passed subsequently to this first night of solitude seemed an age ; but little was our poor tender-hearted Mary prepared for the intelligence she was doomed to receive. There was a difficulty in conveying it to her ; her state of health, and the delicacy of her constitution at the time, rendered any sudden shock dangerous in the extreme. Her husband could not return so soon as he proposed ; he was delayed. His letter appeared to her dry and short ; he was still delayed. On the third day a carriage drove up to the door. Mary's heart was on the wing, she ran to the hall, and received—instead of Burton, the same little smug smart

man, with the brown wig and green spectacles who had brought the news of her uncle's death to Sandown.

His appearance greatly disconcerted Mary, who imagined immediately that Burton had either cut his little finger with the carriage-glass, and died of a lock-jaw, or that he had sat in a draught of air, caught cold, and had perished by the tooth-ache, or that some such horrible catastrophe had happened, and her fears were by no means diminished when her communicant warned her to prepare herself for a most extraordinary event.

How the attorney-at-law managed the *dénouement* I cannot say, not having been present; it will suffice to mention that in about an hour's interview with him, the gentle and affectionate Mary had heard, with safety and in good health, that her uncle (after bequeathing 500*l.* per annum for life to his widow) had left the whole of his fortune to her.

Imprimis.—350,000*l.* in the Funds.

Item—His West India property.

Item.—Eighteen dwelling-houses, situate Nos. 19 to 36 in one street.

Item—Seventeen ditto in another street.

Item—A parish or two in *this* county.

Item—Half a dozen manors in *that* county.

Item—Diamonds and plate.

Item—Mortgages and leases.

Item—Bonds, bills, securities, &c. ; and so many more *Items*, that the little gentleman in the brown bob and spectacles was forced to refresh himself twice with wine and water in the reading an abstract of the will, which, without any regard to legal profit, had been squeezed into thirty-two pages of copy paper, as full as they could hold.

“What does my husband feel about it? does it make *him* happy?” were the first questions this mistress of millions asked.

“He bears the reverse, Madam,” said Mr. Sixaneight, “like a man of sense. His exclamation, upon being satisfied of the fact, was—‘I am delighted to think Mary will now find by the event, that her uncle was not really displeased with our conduct towards him, while he was staying with us; and I thank God that her mind will be relieved from that doubt!’”

And such were the dispositions of this ex-

traordinary couple, that although Burton had on a sudden become the richest commoner in the country, and Mary was declared the first heiress in the land, the greatest pleasure which either of them felt at their accession to such wealth and influence, was the anticipation of the pleasure it would give to the other.

Burton remained at Bath till the last duties to the late Mr. Danvers were fulfilled. Would we were able, for the honour of human nature, to add that his widow shared in them! But no; immediately after hearing the will, she left Bath with her father and sister, having communicated through Mr. Sixaneight and Burton, the name of the banker to whom her annuity was to be paid; but not, if report speaks truth, till she had packed up every thing which could be considered hers, and secured the possession of every valuable, to say the least of it, with which the poor old gentleman had presented her. Those who know that branch of the family better than I do, go so far as to add that she might, in the hurry of her arrangements, have accidentally carried away rather more than was strictly her

own; be that as it may, Burton only waited till he returned home and consulted his Mary, to write to the lady and apprise her of his intention to increase her annuity to two thousand pounds per annum, as a mark of esteem on his part and that of his wife for their deceased relation.

To this liberal offer he received the most insulting answer, in a letter full of vulgar and illiberal reproaches, the coarsest invective, and, what made it more insolent, a most willing *acceptance* of the income, the principal allusion to which, however, was a remark upon the extreme stinginess and want of feeling of those, who had, as they thought, most amply and religiously fulfilled a sacred duty.

Immediately upon Burton's return home, preparations were made for his visiting London, where the necessary forms were to be gone through, in order that he might assume the name of Danvers in addition to his own, according to his uncle's will. Mrs. Burton hourly expecting to be confined, wished him to postpone his journey till the event took

place, which it is hardly necessary to add, he did.

Four days had scarcely elapsed after his return to Sandown, before he received innumerable letters from persons with whom for years he had had no intercourse, congratulating him upon his wonderful good fortune ; and in less than a week he accumulated two maternal uncles, one aunt, a half-mother-in-law, and upwards of fourteen cousins in Scotland alone ; he was elected a member of three learned societies in London, and received a communication from an university which shall be nameless, to know whether the honorary degree of D. C. L. would be agreeable to him.

Various post-chaises, replete with fashionable upholsterers, milliners, dress-makers, booksellers, and wine-merchants, thronged the sweep before the cottage ; nine capital estates were offered to him for sale, and thirty-one persons, whose names he had never heard, appealed to his well known charitable disposition to relieve their wants in various degrees, from the loan of twenty pounds up to the general discharge of the embarrassments of a reverend gentleman with thirteen children.

His little, heretofore quiet, library was crowded with country gentlemen and directors of charitable institutions; those who had sons in the army solicited him to get companies for their boys, others who had chosen the navy, entreated him to get ships for their lads; nay, one man, and he no fool, high at the Bar, going the summer circuit, requested Burton's influence to lift him to the Bench.

All this, although worrying in the extreme as to the *physical* part of the thing, had, it must be confessed, a very strong effect upon Burton's mind, and from rejecting the incense and avoiding the solicitations of his would-be creatures, which he at first cordially and naturally did, he began to get in some degree accustomed to the thing, and to feel that if these aristocratic persons were then so ready to cede to him the possession of influence in the world, which he knew at the moment he had not, it was quite clear if he chose really to attain to it, that it was on the cards for him to do so.

It was during his Mary's illness that the first seed of this new passion was sown; and the news that she had again given him a

daughter was received with something more like disappointment that it was not a boy, than he was in the habit of feeling when he heard, coupled with similar pieces of intelligence, that "She was as well as could be expected." During the first week of her confinement, when that soothing quiet, that witching calm, in which they before had lived, was broken in upon by the intrusion of half the county, as we have already attempted to describe, he formed the project of surprising his lady by purchasing, without her knowledge, the magnificent property of the Duke of Alverstoke, situate and lying contiguous to his own to which in the days of their tranquil happiness she had often referred as a splendid specimen of blended comfort and magnificence in the first class of country residences, wanting, as she had often jestingly said, only a little management and re-arrangement after their own tastes to make it perfection.

The Duke, whose income did not exceed at the utmost, ninety-seven thousand a-year, was so much distressed as to be compelled to part with the property ; and so extraordinarily changed was his neighbour Mr. Burton, by his

recent acquisition of fortune, that his Grace took the trouble to go down from London to Sandown to offer him the preference as a purchaser, on account of the very high personal esteem which he had always entertained for him.

The moment of trial was at hand. Burton had through life felt the passion he had it now in his power to gratify,—he could afford to buy what the Duke of Alverstoke could not afford to keep. Do my hero justice and believe, that if he had not thought the purchase would have made his Mary happy, he would not have effected it; as it was, the preliminaries were shortly settled, and before the restoration of his lady to health and society, the sum of two hundred and sixty thousand pounds had been paid for Milford Park, and that magnificent property legally transferred to Thomas Burton Danvers, Esq. and his heirs, for ever.

Having concluded this purchase, and attained to the possession of his long envied domain, Burton's next proceeding, in order to make the surprise, and consequently the pleasure as he hoped, the greater to his dear Mary, was to get her to London as speedily as possible, in order

that time might be given to effect those changes in the arrangement of the mansion, which she, in the unconscious expression of her wishes, had at various times pointed out in *her* idea as essential to its improvement. For this purpose, no sooner had she recovered from the effects of her confinement, than a magnificently furnished house in Park-Lane was secured for her reception, and forthwith filled with a host of those useless necessities of life, valets, butlers, maitres d'hotel, footmen, house-maids, lady's-maids, laundry-maids, and kitchen-maids, housekeepers, cooks, and coachmen; and while every arrangement was making within the establishment for its mistress's comfort and accommodation, Messrs. Tattersal contributed their quota of horses, and Messrs. Leader and Hatchet busied themselves in constructing new and elegant carriages of every description for her amusement and gratification.

Burton's anxiety to get her to London was extreme, and the moment he effected his purpose, and the dear lady and her dear children were fairly packed up, and on the road to the metropolis, upwards of an hundred workmen were turned loose into the mansion at Milford

Park, all of the very first class in their respective departments, to whom, as was natural, the order was given by their masters, (who had previously received theirs from their employer,) to spare neither cost nor care in rendering the change in the interior such as to make the house the most perfect in all points, of any house in the county.

The billiard-room and large ante-room on the left of the hall were thrown into one and converted into a music-room, a new billiard-room was made of the small blue drawing-room, and the three large drawing-rooms were connected by folding doors with each other, and with the library, which opened into the new and splendid conservatory. The stiff and faded furniture which had scantily decked all the apartments, gave way to ottomans, couches, sofas, chaises-longues, cabrioles, and every species of easy and comfortable seats. The library, which was taken at a valuation, was doubled in extent by the new purchaser, and the arrangement under the immediate superintendence of one of the leading booksellers in London, was perfectly novel. Magnificent lustres and chandeliers adorned the new

gallery, which was added to the suite of apartments by throwing down the partitions of seven smaller rooms ; and the collection of pictures, which his Grace also disposed of, was increased by the acquisition of some three or four dozen original Vandykes, Titians, Rubenses, Claudes, Domenichinos, Carlo Marattis, Holbeins, Guercinos, Vandervelds, and Dows, which a most excellent and active gentleman, who had introduced himself to Mr. Danvers during his short stay in town, had been kind enough to select for him at the sale of a celebrated collection, for less than twenty-eight thousand pounds—a sum so incalculably small, as Danvers was told by another friend, that he made his obliging acquaintance a present of a thousand guineas, as a recompense for his zeal and activity, and the great trouble he had expended in the pursuit.

This gentleman's favours were not strictly confined to his personal exertions, for he had already done Danvers the favour of introducing his friend just named, and who, for less than ten thousand pounds more, stored the apartments at Milford Park with the most beautiful *morceaux* of *bijouterie*, or—*molu* candelabras, made expressly for Buona-

parte, ebony cabinets, splendidly inlaid with gold and silver, with innumerable pieces of invaluable porcelain and China to cover the tortoise-shell commodes; silver chandeliers from the Palazzo di Torcano; antique statues fresh from Florence; invaluable casts and models from Rome, and a cargo of vases from Herculaneum, which were of themselves worth double the whole sum of money.

A magnificent service of plate was forthwith ordered from a leading goldsmith, and while innumerable workmen were busied in its construction, the Heralds' College were with corresponding activity employed in making out a shield worthy of such splendid ware, and a very great man in that department having traced Tom Burton's ancestors back to Tom-burtonos, king of the Huns, satisfied himself and his brethren in arms, of the propriety of allowing him certain quarterings and supporters; but as things easily attained are not always duly valued, it was necessary to make a difficulty and delay about the latter ornaments, which led upon a future occasion to a pleasing equivocation between Mrs. Burton Danvers and a pursuivant, who was despatched to

consult her husband upon the point, and who, seeing *her*, without any preparation to make her understand the precise nature of his business, set the poor unsophisticated lady into all the horrors of a second Sandown menagerie, by endeavouring to ascertain whether her passion lay among rampant lions or griffins guardant.

It being the latter end of June when the family arrived in London, in order to assimilate themselves in due form with those who had in the best possible manner conspired to kill the *ennui* of a fashionable winter, a first-tier opera-box was taken, and Mrs. Burton Danvers's name painted, in white letters at least six inches long, on its brown door. Mr. Burton, at the suggestion of his picture-dealing friend, put down his name as a subscriber of one hundred guineas to the British Gallery; one thousand guineas were paid as a contribution to a projected canal in his own county; he was received as a Fellow of the Royal Society; and through a half-introduction of his old patron, who rejoiced, and I believe sincerely, at his extraordinary elevation, obtained the *entrée* to a distinguished political circle,

which might, in fact, be considered as his primary step into public life.

The first use Burton made of his increased power was to solicit for his deputy the office he himself had for several years enjoyed; and having carried his point with his patron, resigned the situation in favour of that gentleman; if the truth were to be told, I verily believe, he felt more real pleasure in thus securing the happiness of an estimable family, than he did in receiving the same mark of favour when it was equally necessary to *his* own comfort.

The Duchess of Alverstoke and the Lady Elizabeth and the Lady Jane were early in their call upon the Danverses, and the morning visit was followed up by an invitation to dinner, and cards for evening parties, *conversaziones*, &c. Mrs. Burton received a note from her Grace, requesting to know if it would be agreeable to her, to belong to Almack's, and in short the season opened to the newly-arrived lady in all its splendour and *éclat*.

The Duke's dinner was splendid in the extreme; but the company, instead of being confined to a family party, aided by a country

apothecary, as it was on the last visit of our hero and heroine, consisted of two cabinet ministers and their ladies, an earl, his countess and two daughters, one English baron, two Irish ditto; together with a small selection of younger scions of noble stock, in and out of Parliament, and a couple of established wits to entertain the company.

In this brilliant society the poor, dear, mild, innocent Mary, felt terribly oppressed, as if she were all flattened down upon her chair, and had no right to be in the room, and when the Earl of Harrogate, who sat next her at dinner, asked her by way of starting a conversation, whether she preferred Ronzi di Begnis to Camporese, her apprehension grew into perfect alarm, for never having heard of either of the personages or things, whichever they might be, which his Lordship named, it appeared to her somewhat difficult to decide. This, if she had been used to good society, would have been nothing. As it was, her answer was less happy than might be imagined; for the question having been put to her in the midst of a prevailing discussion between the Duke and a flighty Countess, upon the comparative merits

of Silleri and St. Peray, the unsophisticated woman concluded that her neighbour wished to ascertain her opinion of some other wines, with the names of which she happened to be unacquainted, and in order to do what she thought right, she replied to his inquiry about the comparative talents of two opera-singers, by saying, "Whichever you choose, my Lord!"

His Lordship set Mrs. Danvers down either for a wag, or one of the most complying persons upon earth. However, he determined to renew the attack, and ascertain more of the character of his fair friend, and therefore, turning again to her, inquired if she "liked the Opera?"

This question, which passed with *her* for changing the subject, was a great relief. She answered in the affirmative; and it was truth that she *did* like it, for its novelty, having visited the King's Theatre but twice in her life.

"So do I," said the Earl; "but I am seldom able *to make it out*."

"Nor I," said poor Mrs. Danvers; "and it is certainly a great drawback to one's pleasure."

“What, Ma’am, not going?” said the Earl, still fancying his fair friend a wag.

“No, my Lord; not understanding what they say; not being able *to make it out*.”

“Oh,” said his Lordship with an affected gravity, which shewed that he had *made her out*, and which would have been instant death to a person more skilled in the ways of the world.

From this embarrassment she was agreeably relieved by her left-hand neighbour, who began a dissertation upon the relative wit of the French and English, and contended with much force and gaiety for the superiority of the former.

“For instance,” said his Lordship, “I remember a French loyalist shewing me the statue of Buonaparte resting on a triumphal car, in the Place de Carousel: but hating the man, he pointed to the figure, and said with incomparable archness, ‘Voilà Bonaparte; *le Char-l’attend!*’ The same man, on my remarking the letter N used as a decoration for the public buildings in Paris, said, ‘Oui, Monsieur; nous avons à présent les *N-mis partout!*’ These,” added the gay narrator, “I establish

in opposition to any English puns I ever heard; and I appeal to my neighbour Mrs. Danvers to decide between the jokes of my admirable friends (the wits) at the bottom of the table, and those which my French acquaintance sported to me spontaneously, without effort or consideration."

This was the climax of poor Mary's misery; for, in addition to the diffidence she naturally felt at her first entrance into *real* society, she laboured under the disadvantage of not knowing the French language, or, if knowing any thing of it, assuredly not enough to decide upon, or even entirely to comprehend, the double meaning of the jests.

She coloured, and fidgeted, and thought herself fainting. Burton, who sat opposite to her, heard what was going on, and saw her agitation,—he was quite as miserable as herself. Any attempt to extricate her would have risked an exposure; but, as good fortune would have it, just as Mr. Trash was puzzling his brains either to make an extempore joke or exert his available memory by quoting one from the well-known authority of Mr. Joseph Miller, the Duchess, who had no taste for

the buffoonery of her husband's retainers, gave the welcome signal of retreat to the drawing-room.

Mary's delight at this event was a little qualified by a reflection silently made to herself, upon what she considered the excessive rudeness and want of feeling of her Grace, in starting up and leaving the room just as one of her visitors was about to make himself particularly pleasant: not being aware that good breeding very often means downright incivility, and that persons of a certain class are not to be controlled by rules made for their inferiors. I have no doubt but that her Grace had some good and cogent reason for her conduct on this occasion; first, because she was a woman of talent, and secondly, because all women are too sensible to do any thing, however trifling, without a motive.

In the drawing-room Mrs. Burton scarcely fared better than at dinner: of course being a man—one of the “profane,” it is impossible to venture a guess at the subject of the female freemasonry carried on by this fashionable group and their *apprentice* till coffee was announced, but even in the discussion of the only

topics admitted, I believe, into such sanctuaries, namely, love, literature, and dress, the poor novice felt herself dreadfully embarrassed. Still, however, time wore on, and the hope of being shortly joined by her husband and shortly after getting away, buoyed her up, till the Duchess having suddenly announced her intention to introduce her at the Marchioness of Hatfield's *conversazione*, by her ladyship's express desire, mentioned that the carriage was at the door, and that it was time to go.

Mary expressed a reluctance, arising in fact, from not having consulted her husband, and from an apprehension of his alarm, and perhaps displeasure, at her quitting the house without informing him; and yet, during the evening, she had heard the married ladies of the party speak of their lords in such very independent terms, and load with ridicule two persons, the one a man who suffered himself to be *jerried* by his wife, and the other a wife who allowed herself to be controlled by her husband, that feeling nervously anxious to see Burton, and watching the door expecting and hoping that he would enter, she had not courage to avow the real cause of her unwill-

ingness, and merely hesitated without giving a particular reason.

“If it is your dress,” said the Duchess, “my dear Mrs. Danvers, you need not fidget yourself about it; Lady Hatfield won’t care the least in the world; she is a most amiable person, with the best possible heart, and you look so nice and so neat, that if nobody shows you up, you may pass for having just left your toilet.”

“Yes, but then, Madam,” said Mary, catching at any thing like an excuse to get off, “if there is any chance of not *being shown up*, I would rather not go till I have called in the morning.”

“Oh! you quite misunderstand,—I forgot,” said the Duchess, “your unsophistication—no—I meant that if you fancied your dress too plain, it don’t the least signify, because it is quite one of her off-nights.”

Mary’s vanity here received a blow which startled her; she had dressed, as she thought, and her maid thought too, in the most splendid attire, in puffings and flouncings, and trimmings and puckerings, meaning to be the very perfection of fashion; her surprise was little less than mortification when she found her

patroness apologizing for her dowdiness, and treating her as a sort of speck upon a fine picture, or a patch which merely shows itself on a lovely face to give a more brilliant effect to surrounding beauties. Worried to death, and smiling through her half-suppressed tears, the poor victim suffered herself to be led by the Duchess with the greatest kindness to her Grace's carriage, which was in waiting.

As she passed through the hall, Mary could not abstain from casting a wistful look towards the door of the dinner-room in hopes of seeing Danvers; but all was vain, and in spite of her inclination she found herself in a few minutes on the stairs of Lady Hatfield's splendid mansion. Further than the staircase it did not appear likely they would get, and Mary accounted to herself, in the crowd, for the before unintelligible doubts of their *being shown up*. Her astonishment, however, at the extraordinary squeezings and the unceremonious pushings in which she found herself involved was great; but she was perfectly astounded when she beheld the delicate creatures who were engaged in the crowded warfare, and felt the intensity of the heat, and heard the subdued murmur of

nothingnesses which filled the apartments, and saw the listless look of the half-fainting women, the distaste of the whole affair expressed by the men, and the hideous glare of dowagers tottering amid the throng, driven from their beds by the dæmon Dissipation, and led by her sister-fury Vanity, to smear their wrinkled cheeks with paint, bedeck their aged heads with jewels, and rally all the fading energies of life to gasp for a little hour the heated atmosphere of fashion, habitually gaze on scenes in which they are no longer sought or courted, and fancying *that* enjoyment, hobble with regret from the lighted gallery or the sparkling ball-room back to their beds, to expiate in aches and pains till the succeeding evening, the folly of the second childishness which drives them, like spectres, to haunt the spots which, when really *in* the world, they had so happily frequented.

There is no object in all the study of humanity more striking, more awfully instructive than a faded Dowager of fashion! Far be it from me to class under this sweeping denomination the many excellent mothers, the admirable women who so brightly adorn their sex and the peerage of our country. The thing I mean is

one, who, weak in intellect but strong in vanity, has had the misfortune to be born so beautiful as to believe her mind a secondary object hardly worth the cultivating,—whose peach-bloom cheeks, whose coral lips, and flowing hair, whose graceful form and sylph-like figure, have caught the heart—if heart he have—of some man, her equal in rank, in fortune, and in intellect,—who, as the careless wife, has sparkled and dazzled through her glittering career, and after a married life of thirty years finds herself the widowed mother of a race of girls, her very counterparts in mind and person, in trickings and manœuvrings for whom, she has had just sufficient cunning to succeed.

They in their turn marry, and she is left at sixty to her own resources. Where are they? Her ideas of comfort centre not in home; and if they did, what home has she?—Her daughters are mixing in the world, which she should make a resolution to leave—Society means with her an assembly of hundreds; her acquaintances are numerous, her friends scant: religion with her, means the possession of a well-curtained, well-cushioned, well-carpeted pew in a fashionable chapel; her notions of

charity are comprised in an annual donation or two to a lying-in hospital, or a female penitentiary: but without a crowd she dies; and thus, to exist, she risks her life night after night by the disreputable exposure of her aged person, bedizened with the ornaments which graced her figure in its youth, and after feverishly enduring the loudly-whispered satire, and the ill-concealed laughter of the next generation, who stand round about her, she sinks into her crimson velvet coffin, without creating a sensation, except perhaps in the breast of her next heir, who, by her departure from *this* world for one of which she has never thought, is relieved from the painful necessity of paying her Ladyship a jointure.

Of this wretched class Mary had a favourable opportunity of seeing a pretty sprinkling of specimens; and her astonishment at the sight was mingled with a suspicion of the correctness of her own conduct. She, for the first time, saw age without respecting it, and felt a disposition to smile at infirmities which reason and religion had, till that moment, taught her to soothe and commiserate.

The Duchess undertook to point out to her new friend any remarkable persons, and as the lady from the country became a little more reconciled to the heat and crowd, and saw near her the hero whose name and fame have reached the farthest limits of the nether world, —ministers whose public conduct she had heard so unceremoniously canvassed, and whose political lives were open to the remarks, the censure, or the praise of millions, at her elbow, good-natured, pleasant, laughing men of the world, anxious even for an introduction to herself,—when she beheld persons branded by their political opponents with every opprobrious epithet, and held up as examples of vice, profligacy, and folly, mingling in the common affairs of life, the most affectionate and tender of husbands, the kindest and most liberal of fathers,—when she saw beauty she had read of, and felt herself courted and caressed by persons whose powers of attraction had formed the theme of her mother's conversation, —herself domesticated with those, who, by their rank and station, were the most celebrated in the land—a doubt floated in her mind as to the reality of the

scene she enjoyed. She never thought of home; her anxiety about Danvers was gone, her whole mind was occupied with seeing and hearing, and gazing and wondering.

As the company began to depart, an opportunity offered for an introduction to the Marchioness, who avowed herself perfectly delighted to make Mrs. Danvers's acquaintance; and at about half-past one the poor little woman found herself re-seated in the Duchess's carriage on her way home. The assembly in all its splendour danced before her eyes, and as they rattled through the streets the conversation was composed of such remarks as persons invariably make upon such things as parties; except that the Duchess, who, two hours before, had represented the Marchioness to Mary as a most excellent creature with "such a heart," now launched out against her in a strain of ridicule which quite startled her companion, while Lady Jane took the extraordinary liberty, as Mary thought it, of commenting with equal freedom upon her Ladyship's daughters, and descanted upon the flirtation of one of them with a *ci-devant* beau of her own, in a strain so matured and worldly, that our poor country

body rejoiced in the darkness of the carriage, which prevented the expression of her feelings from being visible in her countenance.

Arrived at home, Mary ran up-stairs to the drawing-room. "Where is Mr. Danvers?" was the first question. "He is not returned, Madam," was the answer. Mary was alarmed, and distressed; the carriage had returned about twelve—it was then two. The poor little woman was hardly fashionable enough to conceal her feelings, but all active measures were vain; in the wide world of London she would uselessly try to guess where her loved husband was, and she endeavoured to dissipate her apprehensions by visiting her children.

They slept, and looked so happy in their sleep, that Mary was startled lest the thundering peal at the hall-door, which announced Danvers's return, should "fright them from their slumbers." When he met her, his countenance bore no mark of sorrow or of anger; on the contrary, he appeared elated and pleased, and showed himself still more pleased and more elated when his darling Mary gave him a detailed account of the party and her reception.

“To-morrow, my love,” said Danvers, “your jewels and the service of gold plate will be home. Next week you shall be presented; it is the last drawing-room for the season; and immediately after, we will have the Alverstokes here at dinner—he hasn’t such a service of plate in his possession!”

“Oh! and I *must* tell you,” said Mary; “Lord Lavenham, one of the ministers, the most agreeable creature in the world, was so extremely civil, and Lord Wellborough introduced me to his Countess, and Mr. Essendon, so mild, so kind, and so gentle, and so unlike what the newspapers say he is.”

“Hang the newspapers!” said Danvers. “I am quite delighted to find that the world pleases you as it pleases me. Do as I do; take your own impressions, see with your own eyes, and hear with your own ears.”

“One *must* be guided a little by the public press,” said Mrs. Danvers.

“Not a jot, not a moment, my girl,” said her husband: “the public press is an admirable help to those who will not take the trouble to judge for themselves. Your poor uncle, if he were alive, would, in his Indian phraseo-

logy, call a London newspaper a *Thinkabadar*; it saves one all the pain of making up opinions, or deciding personally, and so far, it is excessively convenient in a large city, where a man has ten thousand other things to do; but if *we did* think at all, and I hope, my dearest love, that you and I *do*--what right, what claim has a worthy gentleman, shut up in his garret, to prescribe, by the melancholy gleamings of his rushlight, rules for our observance, directions for the guidance of our taste, and hints towards forming our judgment upon facts and objects as visible and open to *us* as to *him*. His obscurity alone gives him importance, as vessels at sea seem larger in a fog; and the combination of that mysterious monosyllable *WE*, by which he monarchically dispenses his ordinances with the notorious apathy of the world at large, confers upon the hidden individual in his editorial capacity a consequence and an influence, which, if he were known, neither *he* nor his fellows could possibly obtain, and affords him the power and opportunity of dictating to his superiors in intellect, and of regulating society, into which he would not personally be suffered

to intrude. But you, my Mary, have sufficient good sense and right feeling to guide your actions without reference to prevailing fashions or popular cries. Decide for yourself, and I will back you for correctness of judgment against the wisest and wittiest of them all."

Danvers was in an exceedingly good humour, and having himself been mightily pleased with the compliments which had been paid to his talents after dinner at his Grace's, felt a sort of complacent disposition to dispense compliments in his turn, for, if his wife had been flattered at the Marchioness's by the civilities and attentions of one half of the cabinet, the other half had been sedulously employed in winning the affections of her happy husband at the Duke's.

It was amusing to me, speculating as I do upon the manners and ways of this world, to mark the various little by-paths which these noble and learned men took to assail the vanity, and secure the esteem, of this once neglected genius.

Danvers, when simply Thomas Burton, Esq. Member of the Honourable Society of the Inner Temple, had written, of course "merely

for his amusement, and published at the earnest desire of his partial friends, extremely against his own inclination," a collection of "Poetical Trifles,"—"A Sonnet to Half a Rose-leaf," "Lines to Maria's Canary-bird," "Albert and Adeline," "Elegy on the Loss of a dear Cousin," "Ode on Shooter's Hill," "The Parson and the Lawyer," a comic tale, sundry Epigrams; a Song adapted to a Babylonish melody, and introduced by Miss Stephens into Guy Mannering, "The Death-bed of Peter the Great," "Lines to Liberty," and an "Ode to the Spring;" which were printed, at his own proper charge, on wove paper, displaying in the title-page a wood-cut vignette of a shepherd-boy playing a pipe under a tree, with the hinder parts of two fat sheep in a corner, by way of back ground; over whose heads, or at least over the place where, by its relative position to their tails, their heads ought to have been, stood a little pert parish-church spire like an extinguisher in the distance, and for motto,

—— Tenet insanabile multos
Scribendi cacöethes.

Juv.

Of these "poetical trifles," as may easily be imagined, nobody heard at the time, except indeed an obscure reviewer, who, anxious at once to make a fame for himself, and break a butterfly on the wheel, ripped them up in his unread "periodical," and the whole sale of the work amounted to perhaps fifty.

Danvers was particularly sore about the neglect of his poetical genius—the nipping in the bud which he had experienced—and always felt that he was capable of great things in the literary world; this, (whether he had betrayed himself, or whether some of his friends had betrayed him, I know not) one of the "very great" men certainly knew, and the masterly manner in which his Lordship, after an elaborate discussion upon the beauties of SCOTT, BYRON, and CAMPBELL, dropped down gently and unsuspectedly upon the "Poetical Trifles" of Mr. Thomas Burton, far excelled any thing I ever beheld in the art of making the amiable. Nothing, in short, could exceed the skill of the angler, except the avidity of the victim,—his Lordship had committed to memory two or three lines of one of the effusions, and when he repeated them with a sort of

sing-song twang, expressive of a rapturous approbation, the victory was complete, and, long before the party broke up, Danvers had consented to oppose the Whig candidate in his own county, at the then rapidly approaching election.

This secret, like all his others, he confided to Mary; not so communicative had been the Duchess, about the purchase of Milford Park, of which event Mrs. Danvers was still profoundly ignorant. How the Duchess could have maintained this extraordinary silence upon a subject so important both to her Grace and her constant companion, may indeed puzzle such of my readers as are married, but their astonishment will perhaps cease, when they know that the Duke of Alverstoke, finding secrecy so great an object with Danvers as to form almost one of the *conditions* of purchase, resolved most effectually to prevent his Duchess from revealing the fact, by not confiding it to her Grace's custody.

Milford Park never was a favorite residence with her Grace, whose taste and propensities led her to prefer another place of her Duke's nearer London during some part of

the year, and the lead at a fashionable and *recherché* watering-place at another, so that he was quite certain the loss of Milford Park would not be to her an object of such importance, as the observance of the secret was to Danvers, whose whole heart was fixed upon surprising his Mary with his magnificent purchase, on their return to the country.

Immense as Danvers's wealth was, and enormous as his income appeared to be, he felt greatly annoyed during the week subsequent to that in which he pledged himself to stand for the county, to find that, with regard to ready-money, he was a good deal straitened. His wife's uncle had left nearly three hundred and fifty thousand pounds 3 per cents. it was true, but two hundred and sixty thousand had been sunk in the purchase of Milford Park; upwards of twenty-five thousand had already been expended in pictures and furniture; and more than twelve thousand pounds was the estimated expense of the alterations; while the London house, which he had purchased, and upon which innumerable workmen were employed, was still unpaid for.

In the middle of this week arrived, under the special charge of a partner, Mrs. Danvers's

jewels. That they should be more splendid than the Duchess of Alverstoke's, had been Danvers's direction to the jeweller—more expensive they would be, of course. The gold plate, too, arrived; never was any thing more superb. The crests executed in the most admirable manner, the shields embossed, the quarterings so beautifully distinct, the *plateau* so massive, the tureens inimitable. The magnificent centre-ornament excited shrieks of approbation, especially from the children of the family. The graces grouped bore on their heads a dozen branches of candlesticks, most beautifully, classically, and judiciously arranged. On one side was the caduceus of Mercury, on the other the shield of the house of Danvers, while nearer the base were emblematical figures of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, pouring libations out of cornucupias, adorned with the family arms, into a receptacle maintained by rampant lions and griffins guardant, the family supporters, interspersed with palm-trees, cannons and balls, anchors and shields, flags and banners, eagles and trumpets, and all sorts of things which could be collected into a given space by the ingenuity of the artist, or the gold of the purchaser.

To show the plate, parties must forthwith be made ; to shew the jewels, Mary must go to court. The Duchess, who, when she saw the diamonds, wished her at old Nick, presented her ; and Mary returned from the fluttering ceremony enraptured with the reception she had met, and delighted with that noble grace and winning warmth of manner for which the illustrious object of her dutiful admiration has ever been celebrated all over the world.

The knockings, the rattlings, the ringings, the drivings, the thunderings which occupied the five or six consecutive mornings after Mrs. Danvers had “played out her diamonds” at Pimlico, were unparalleled in Park Lane ; packs of cards, bearing names, any one of which would have set Sandown Cottage in an uproar, were piled upon the tables in the hall ; other packs were issued to an incalculable extent. Danvers’s dinners made Ude himself jealous, and Mrs. Danvers’s parties filled the fashionable world with consternation. The dinners Mrs. Danvers voted a bore ; for when the political tufts—political connexion was Danvers’s aim—came to dine, and occasionally persons of higher rank than they, the poor little

unsophisticated woman felt it necessary to *put on* certain airs, which she saw her present equals, as she thought them, *play off*; and having a turn for imitation, she caught their manner (and assumed it as her own) of coldly bowing and receiving visitors distantly like a little queen, seeming as if she thought herself the honouring party, while her high-born guests looked at *her*, and her surrounding gold and silver, and her sparkling jewels, and her bedizened lacqueys, merely as so many proofs of successful trade, not always unattended by a sigh of regret that such excellent things should be so grievously thrown away upon persons who did not know how to use them.

This sounds strange, but it is true, and I and every other man who mixes in society perceive it, that wealth, inordinate and immense as it may be, cannot give the *tact*, the manner of doing things. In the midst of the golden dishes and golden vases, there is always some mistake at such dinners, some little blunder which neither the master nor mistress of the house can hope to rectify on any future occasion, not being conscious of any thing wrong: for instance, the butlers stand looking at each

other, in attitudes with dishes in their hands, waiting for signals, and hesitating where to put them down; then there is always a dreadful uncertainty about the wine; Lunel is detected in a long-necked bottle up to his chin in an ice-pail, presuming to do duty for St. Peray, *absent without leave*; the Claret is frozen hard, the Hock left luke-warm, and common red port put down upon the table as if people were to drink it; the fish is generally doubtful; the *entrées* cold, and the *soufflets* flat and heavy; while the want of regularity in the dinner pervades even the guests, and one has perhaps to sit opposite to two or three odd-looking persons, (connexions of the family who *must* be asked,) with coarse neckcloths, and great red hands, with gold rings upon the fingers; people who go the horrid lengths of eating with their knives and calling for porter. In short, there is always some drawback, some terrible qualifier in the affair, which it would be difficult distinctly to define, but which invariably gives the *air bourgeoise* to all the attempts of upstart wealth to imitate the tone and manner of the aristocracy of our country.

The evenings at Danvers's were better done: less nicety was required, and so that the

crowd was kept up, and the staircases nearly broken down, people cared little about it. The desire of showing off the gold and silver induced *banquets*, and to say truth, the multitude were dazzled and delighted, and Mrs. Danvers had the satisfaction to see the lists of her visitors proclaimed in the Morning Post, furnished to that journal by her own house-steward, and paid for with her own money; and, moreover, the gratification of going to bed about four o'clock in the morning six times in every week, and of labouring with the headache seven days during the same period.

The time approached when Danvers was to appear in the character of candidate for the county, and, as the hour drew near, his heart beat high for the contest. It was at this eventful juncture that his Mary was to be installed in the sovereignty of Milford Park and its domains. It was to this (once) seat of all the Alverstokes that Burton Danvers was to be drawn in triumph from the hustings. Certain victory was his own; for though a contest *might* by a remote probability take place, defeat with *his influence*, they told him, was impossible.

As a staggerer to the opposition party,

Danvers was advised to pay a large sum into one of the country-banks established in the town where the election was to take place; because, although in all probability no money would actually be wanted, still, if there did exist a disposition to oppose him, the knowledge of the amount of the fund applicable to the struggle might deter a less wealthy faction from maintaining the campaign.

Danvers saw the justice and policy of this measure, but, at the same time, had not the *matériel* at hand. The only resource he knew of was to borrow from his dear Mary the thirty thousand pounds which she had brought him, but which he, in all the ardour of affection, had settled upon her. Her consent to the loan, one can easily imagine, was not long "*a-gaining*;" but Danvers had considerable difficulty with two testy trustees, who vegetated in courts in the City, in the midst of papers and parchments, and who would calculate you to a fraction, the interest, at three and one-seventeenth per cent., of one farthing sterling for half a minute and five seconds.

These worthy persons appeared to Danvers to be either particularly deaf or uncommonly dull

of apprehension, when he applied to them in his emergency. They, on the other hand, thought him *mad*; and though the trust-deed gave them full power (indeed it was almost specified that it should be so) to release Danvers, upon any suitable occasion, from the restraint he had so honourably imposed upon himself with regard to Mary's money, they were not so actively alive to the merits of representing a county or contesting an election, as our enthusiastic hero; and his spirits and health were absolutely jaded and injured by his frequent visits to Throgmorton and Threadneedle streets, and by the implacable obstinacy of two curmudgeons, whom he himself had raised into the power which they now exerted against him.

After innumerable discussions, it was, however, agreed that he should assign over to them the whole of his London property, consisting of sundry streets, lanes, rows, and alleys, situate and lying in certain parts and parishes of the metropolis, in consideration of which they would take upon themselves to advance out of the trust-money, with the consent of the party, twenty-five thousand pounds.

Having made this arrangement, his heart

was at ease, and as the season drew to a close, and the Houses were up, all his objects seemed fast concentrating. As was expected, just previous to the Prorogation, the old Member for Milford took the Chiltern Hundreds, and retired from public life. The new writ was moved for, and the signal for preparation thrown out. Mrs. Danvers gave her last fête, and the next week saw them on their road to the West.

They travelled *en prince* — three carriages *en suite*. The happy couple in their barouche, with the two eldest girls, so pale and so altered from the effects of smoke and the pure air of Park-lane, that they looked like ghosts of their former selves. In the second carriage, more children and two governesses; in the third, domestics of sorts. Three caravans had started the day before, with other servants and actual necessities of life, and it did not puzzle Mary a little, when she began for the first time during the last three months, to calculate how and where the *retinue* which accompanied them were to be accommodated at Sandown. Danvers assured her that every thing was arranged, and she, justly confiding

in him, who never had deceived her, was perfectly satisfied that all would be well. Besides, her present situation—for she was again in the family way—precluded more exertion than the mere carrying on of a fashionable life actually required.

The second day of their journey was fine, and the country looked beautifully as the carriage reached the hill which commanded the magnificent park and house of Milford. Danvers's heart beat and throbbed; Mary stretched her eye to look for quiet, humble, little Sandown. It was concealed by the trees on the road-side, but Milford stood pre-eminent. There appeared groups of people in the front of the house, flags were flying on Sandown tower and on Milford steeple, the sound of bells was wafted on the breeze, and, as the carriage descended the hill, a gay and motley group, carrying flags and ribands, headed by the village band, were seen approaching. A vast number of the farmers, the clergymen of the three contiguous parishes, all the workmen who had been employed, and several of the neighbouring country gentlemen, had joined, some on foot and some on horseback, in the merry crowd.

As the carriage drew near, shouts rent the air, and when the parties met, several men advanced and unharnessed the horses from the barouche, and with that truly independent spirit so peculiar to the British character, harnessed themselves to the vehicle with ropes, and proceeded to draw it and its contents towards the park gates.

The country gentlemen drew near the vehicle, and thrusting their hands into the windows, were received with hearty recognitions by the aspirant candidate for their suffrages. Danvers felt completely happy, Mary seemed bewildered, and as they passed the lane leading to Sandown Cottage, she pulled her dear husband by the coat, and apprised him that the people were going the wrong road.

“Never mind, my life,” said Danvers, “all will be right at last.”

The arched entrance to the park was hung with garlands of flowers, and as they entered the domain, Danvers ordered the head of the barouche to be thrown open, and presenting himself and his wife to his new tenants, and

perhaps constituents, he was received with cheers re-echoed to the sky.

As the procession moved towards the great entrance of Milford Hall, Mary again ventured to remonstrate against going any where but home, pleading fatigue, dishabille, and ten thousand other things, to which, as she thought unkindly, her husband appeared to pay no attention; but as the carriage drew up to the steps under the portico, and she beheld over the magnificent entrance the arms of Burton Danvers usurping the place of those of all the Alverstokes, her head grew giddy—and turning to her husband she pointed to the shield and looked in his face for an explanation of the mystery.

The tear started in his eye—he pressed her hand, and stammered out, “It is all yours, my life—all your own;”—his feelings were too much for him.—Her’s! the humble unassuming Mary Gatcombe mistress of Milford Park! and these her retainers, her tenants, her almost vassals—she, as all women are, was more collected under such striking circumstances than her husband, and when the steps were lowered and the arms of the leading men

proffered for her support, she stepped from her carriage after the manner of a duchess, and continued bowing gracefully to the people.

In the hall and on the steps were assembled all the nobility and gentry in that part of the county who were interested in Danvers's election. A magnificent dinner was prepared, and the evening closed with a splendid ball for the ladies and the tenantry. The gallery, illuminated in the most elegant manner, was appropriated to dancing, and the whole building wore the aspect of some fairy palace. At one, the banqueting-rooms were thrown open, and there, as if transported thither by magic, the splendid service of plate appeared bending the lengthened tables; beyond, in a temporary building made to communicate by large folding doors with these apartments, upwards of three hundred of the tenantry and neighbouring villagers, *not voters*, were seen regaling themselves with more homely but more substantial fare. Health and prosperity to the house of Danvers," was proposed by the senior nobleman present, shouts again rent the building, and a band struck up the pleasing and appropriate air of "*Money in both Pockets.*"

Mary supported her new character with admirable dignity, and Danvers's eyes were constantly wandering towards her's to catch their expression as every new contrivance of luxury or amusement developed itself; and it was not till "Sol," to use the figurative yet beautiful imagery of the Morning Post, had given a great many warnings to the visitors to depart, that the numerous company, great and small, high and low, betook themselves to their respective homes.

The early part of the succeeding day was spent by Mary in examining all the improvements of Milford Hall, in contemplating the pictures, the pieces of *virtù*, the splendid ornaments and tasteful decorations of her magnificent residence, and at noon the deputation arrived which was to accompany the Tory candidate to the neighbouring Town-Hall—the barouche decorated with sky-blue ribbands, and drawn by six beautiful bright-bay horses, who appeared conscious of the man-milinery with which they, as well as the carriage, were adorned, stood at the door, and the master of the mansion, accompanied by his proposer and seconder, left the park attended by the village

band, and a considerable *posse* of peasantry carrying sky-blue banners, some inscribed with the name of Danvers, and others bearing little apothegms and political cant-sayings applicable to the occasion, such as, “ Church and State ! ” — “ King and Constitution ! ” — “ Danvers for Ever ! ” — “ No Popery ! ” — “ Live and let Live ! ” &c. &c.

The procession was followed at a short distance by Mrs. Danvers, and five of her little daughters, in her open carriage. Mrs. Danvers, dressed in a sky-blue pelisse, with a sky-blue bonnet and sky-blue feathers, and sky-blue gloves, bowed ever and anon to the PEOPLE; and the five little children, all dressed in little sky-blue spencers, with sky-blue bonnets and sky-blue gloves, followed the example of their mamma, and kept bowing like so many Chinese Mandarins on a chimney-piece, unconscious of the object for which they were thus exhibiting themselves. I remember, as the carriage passed the part of the procession in which I happened to be,—and I saw their inclinations (I mean of their poor little heads), and heard the village band play “ They are a’ noddin, nid nid nodding,”—I

couldn't help smiling, to say the least of it, at such super-eminent mummary.

Excepting one venerable member of a certain national assembly, who is always *had* by the *last* speaker, I suppose no man goes to that which was once a chapel, with a mind unmade up. If he do, and be open to the effect of oratory, he will soon be held of no more value than the very respectable gentleman to whom I have just ventured to allude; and therefore it has always struck me, that, except for the amusement or edification of strangers, all the long and elaborate speeches from either side are so many wasteful expenditures of time and lungs. I am quite sure that one alteration in the proceedings of that assembly would be hailed by many men as "exceeding salutary:" I mean a standing order that the House should divide *first*, and debate *afterwards*. This would settle the matter more expeditiously, leave those only who prefer speaking and hearing to eating or sleeping, and undoubtedly the national affairs would be as well conducted, and thrive as well, as at present; and for this plain reason — that if OPPOSITION oratory

really *had* an effect, public business could not go on at all !

As human nature has implanted similar passions and feelings in all men, whether electors or representatives, it appeared to me that the expensive pageantry of the Danvers procession was money wasted. The mob—the ploughmen and the waggoners—might be pleased with the silken flags and the golden maxims, and the rosy-cheeked damsels and the withered grandams would bless the pretty eyes and the dear hearts of the sweet children who were paraded in the barouche ; but, alas ! those dear and endearing creatures, the ladies, with the best inclinations towards the support of honour and virtue, have unfortunately no votes ; neither have the ploughmen nor the carters ; and therefore, as I concluded that very few of the electors, in point of fact, were likely to mount the hustings till a certain time after they had determined which candidate was to have their votes, it struck me that the gewgaws and ribands flying in the air were relatively to the electors what the tropes, figures, and metaphors of their representatives were, when tried upon

a different assemblage of persons, in a different place.

Danvers was proposed, and as was expected, an Opposition Candidate started in the person of Sir Oliver Freeman, whose barouche was left far behind himself, and who was literally carried into the Town-Hall upon the shoulders of the PEOPLE.

Sir Oliver was a patriot; and after Mr. Danvers had been nominated and seconded amidst the most violent hootings and hissings, the worthy Baronet's name was received with cheers, only equalled by those which had followed Danvers's health the night before, under his own roof.

Sir Oliver Freeman was, as I have just said, a patriot—an emancipator of Roman Catholics, and a Slave-Trade Abolitionist. He had disinherited his eldest son for marrying a Papist, and separated from his wife on account of the overbearing violence of his temper.

He deprecated the return to Cash-payments, and, while gold was scarce, refused to receive any thing but guineas in payment of his rents. He advocated the cause of the Christian

Greeks, and subscribed to Hone; he wept at agricultural distress, and never lowered his rents. He cried for the repeal of the Six Acts, and prosecuted poachers with the utmost rigour of the law; he was a saint, and had carried an address to Brandenburgh. He heard family prayers twice every day, and had a daughter by the wife of a noble Earl, his neighbour; which daughter the said Noble Earl recognized and acknowledged, though by no means doubtful of her origin.

He moreover spent much of his time in endeavouring to improve the condition of poor prisoners, and introduced the Tread-mill into the County Gaol; he subscribed for the Irish rebels, and convicted poor women at Quarter-Sessions of the horrible crime of mendicity; was President of a Branch Bible Society, and seduced his wife's housemaids; was a staunch advocate for Parliamentary Reform, and sat ten years for a rotten borough; made speeches against tithes, being one of the greatest lay-impropriators in the kingdom; talked of the glorious sovereignty of the people, and never missed a levee or a drawing-room in his life.

Thus qualified, Sir Oliver Freeman stood forward a Son of Freedom, who on this special occasion had declared he would *spend fifty thousand pounds* to maintain the *independence* of his native county.

To what specific purpose so large a sum was to be applied, it does not become me, having a due fear of Speaker's warrants before my eyes, to suggest. Danvers at all events had five-and-twenty thousand already in the field, and the war commenced with the greatest activity.

At the close of the first day's poll, the numbers stood

Burton Danvers, Esq.	. . . 238
Sir Oliver Freeman	. . . 196

Mr. Danvers attempted to return his thanks to the people, but the partisans of Sir Oliver would hear nothing he had to say; hootings and hissings assailed him when he appeared, and having worked himself semaphorically for half an hour, he gave up all hope of making himself understood, and made way for Sir Oliver, who repeated those often uttered phrases and points, which your real man of

the people has always at hand, and was received with the most unqualified enthusiasm.

And thus, with little variation, did the contest continue through the whole period allowed by statute. At the end of the twelfth day all Danvers's ready money was gone; how, his agents, I suppose, cared little; still there were upwards of a thousand freeholders unpollled. Six hundred were resident in London and distant parts. Chaises, carriages, horses, waggon, and all things moveable, were put in requisition—the struggle was made—posters killed with fatigue, drivers damaged, and vehicles broken, and at the close of the poll on the fifteenth day, the numbers stood

Sir Oliver Freeman	. . . 2346
Burton Danvers, Esq.	. . . 2109
Majority for Freeman	237

This rare occurrence of a man of the people succeeding in an attempt upon a county, was the day after Danvers's defeat *satisfactorily* accounted for by one of his agents, who *then* informed our hero that it never was imagined by those who had solicited him to stand, that

he *could possibly* succeed ; and that the opposition to Sir Oliver had only been carried on to try his purse and his temper.

Danvers was rather vexed at the want of candour which he thought he perceived about his aristocratic friends in London, and was in fact more mortified at the failure of his attempt, than at the loss of upwards of thirty-three thousand pounds which had been expended in it. With respect to his wish to sit in Parliament, it was very soon gratified by the offer of an introduction to a select party of nine gentlemen, who were in the habit of returning two members, one of whom was just dead, and of which nine, six were extremely well inclined towards Burton. He accepted the proposal, and was accordingly announced in the course of the ensuing week from the Crown Office, as returned to serve in the United Parliament for the Borough of Penfold.

Once in parliament, Danvers began to dream of honours and distinctions : he was conscious of his powers, he began to feel his importance, and if he could but have a son, his aim would be the peerage—to ennoble the blood of the Burtons in his person, to grace

his Mary's brows with the golden circlet and Baronial pearls—the thought was charming. For more than three weeks he was puzzling himself what title he should select, if the Minister felt inclined to offer him a choice.

Mrs. Danvers was on the eve of making another addition to his family when her trustees called upon him to replace the money which he had borrowed, and redeem his assigned property. On the receipt of that letter he first fancied it possible to be poor in the midst of wealth. He had not a thousand pounds at his banker's—the funded property was reduced by the purchase and improvements of Milford Park, and of the town house in Grosvenor-square to little more than forty thousand pounds—his English rents were not due till the following March—his West India agents had delayed their consignments unaccountably—the last sales did not nett the prime cost—and the depreciation of agricultural property at home did not promise him more than fifty-seven per cent. of his nominal income.

On the other hand, there were the jewels and the gold plate unpaid for ; his wife's own

fortune sunk in the fruitless election ; his establishment immense (for having ascertained the number of servants, horses, keepers, grooms, and helpers, retained by the Duke at Milford, Danvers resolved to have one or two more of each description of animals and domestics than his Grace); heavy bills for repairs of London property, actually necessary to prevent the houses from falling ; in short, the solicitude about the title and the son gave place to a more important anxiety about himself. Desirous beyond measure that Mary should not perceive his agitation, he resolved to run up to London, and make some arrangement with the trustees, so that she might not be vexed or disturbed upon the business.

In this hasty visit he directed as much of his landed property as would restore the amount to the hands of the trustees, to be sold, generously adding to the original sum twenty-five thousand pounds, as a surprise upon his Mary, which sum of fifty thousand pounds was shortly after realized by the forced sale of property, worth, with proper management, more than double that amount ; indeed, upwards of four thousand five hundred pounds per annum of rental was sacrificed to make the arrangement.

Danvers, however, was happier when he had put this money out of his own reach and secured it for his wife at all events, than when he first started from Milford Park.

Shortly after his return he was presented with a seventh daughter, and received the congratulations of all his neighbours. The approach of Christmas brought with it festivities and charitable distributions to the poor in the vicinity, soup and meats were daily dispensed from the kitchen of Milford, beer flowed in torrents from the cellar, and Danvers could by no means discern what was meant by sundry inscriptions in chalk, which adorned his walls and gates and lodges during the inclement season, while he was scattering good with so liberal a hand—such as, “No slave driver;” “No dead dogs;” “Ditchwater is good enough for the poor;” “No tyrants;” which glared upon his eyes wherever they turned, and afforded a strong presumption that the *literary* friends of Dr. Eady and Mr. Warren the blacking manufacturer were making a tour of the county.

Extremely anxious to know what the import of such quaintnesses really might be, and yet

not wishing to appear moved by them, poor Danvers was completely worried, till, through some sinuous intercourse between one of the governesses and Mrs. Danvers's own maid, it reached the mistress of the house, and very shortly after the master, that the poor of the neighbourhood were actually in arms against him because the beer which he gave to them in charity was not of the first quality of ale, and that a report had been spread, no doubt by the friends of Freeman, that the soup was made of dead dogs, because it happened not to be turtle.

Danvers was mortified to death at this—his aim was to be popular—and in order to carry his point he declined prosecuting a gang of poachers who were detected in his plantations destroying his pheasants. The result of such leniency may be gathered from the fact, that at the end of the following week the word “Spooney” was depicted in large characters all over the neighbourhood, and after a fortnight had elapsed, one of his gamekeepers was found murdered in the wood, whose widow and seven helpless children were instructed, by the Opposition part of the

neighbouring town, to throw the whole blame of their loss upon the chicken-heartedness of the man, who, if he had prosecuted the marauders to conviction, would have been marked out by them as a tyrant.

At this period of my history, Danvers heard that the term for which Mr. Podgers had let his villa in that neighbourhood had just expired, and that he and his family were on the point of returning to their former residence; and this intelligence was accompanied by a rumour that a will of later date than that under which Danvers possessed the old gentleman's property had been since discovered, and that Captain Stubbs, the former and still continued lover of the widow, was to accompany the family party back to Somersetshire to *enforce* the attention of Danvers to the claims of the ill-used relict of his wife's departed uncle.

In addition to all the other miseries which this would entail upon them, the pew belonging to the Podgers's joined that belonging to Milford Park, so that even those hours and that place which should be sacred but to one only feeling, were necessarily to be disturbed,

at least by the presence, and perhaps by the impertinence, of this abominable family.

The commencement of the session of Parliament, however, formed an admirable excuse for Danvers to *get away* from a place, the object of his former ambition, the scene of all his proposed pleasures; and such is the extraordinary construction of the human mind and such the effect of events upon it, that our hero felt a weight removed from his spirits when he found himself and his fond family quietly seated in the new house in Grosvenor-square.

The rumour about the will had, however, reached London, and the jewellers and silversmiths ventured to mention their account, which in the former capacity amounted to fifty-two thousand pounds, and in the latter to upwards of thirty thousand. This very moderate appeal to his recollection caused another enquiry into his affairs, when he discovered that his balance at his banker's was little more than nothing, and that the thirty thousand pounds which he expected probably to receive at Lady-day, would not more than pay the half of one bill. He wrote to those heavy creditors,

and desired their patience, which was silently and somewhat sullenly accorded.

The session opened, and Danvers was a regular attendant at the House, night after night, constantly sitting up till dawn of day to vote; while poor Mary, worried and vexed at the complete destruction of all her little comforts, began to feel symptoms of indisposition, to which she had hitherto been a stranger. She grew thin and low-spirited—so did Danvers, he was worrying himself all day about her, and all night about politics; she was worrying herself all night about him, and all day about her children. Emma's right foot turned in when it should have turned out, and Fanny's teeth did not turn out well—Rosa looked pale—Ellen had a little twist in her figure—Angelica was downright ugly, and Katharine had an impediment in her speech; and all this was the fault of Mademoiselle de Seiseau and Miss Widdrington—they took no pains to regulate the children, and it was quite impossible, love them as truly and as tenderly as she might, that a woman in Mrs. Danvers's line of life should be able to give her personal attention to her nursery—Danvers would not allow it.

Danvers, having screwed his courage to the sticking-place, at length made a speech in Parliament; it was short but pithy, and great credit was due to him for the matter and the manner of its delivery. He anticipated seeing the next morning in the report of debates his name and harangue, interspersed with "Hear, Hear," and "Cheers from the Treasury Benches," "laughter, &c." and came down more eager for fame than breakfast. Three morning papers were on the table; he first took up the Times, and having just cast his eye over three columns of a speech by Brougham, and an equally long reply by a much wiser man, his attention was arrested by these words,—

"An honourable member, whose name we could not catch, made a few observations, which were totally inaudible in the gallery."

In a transport of rage he threw down the Times, exclaiming against its political spite in thus slurring over an able speech, because it came from the *right* side of the House, and snatching up the Chronicle, gratified himself by perusing these lines:—

“ Mr. *Tanvers* coincided in opinion with the last speaker.”

“ Worse, and worse,” exclaimed our unfortunate member: “ they shall be had up—I’ll move them to Newgate! Monsters! my name not even properly spelt—this is unbearable!” With the view of soothing his feelings with some of the honey of Toryism, he unfolded the *Morning Post* in perfect security of getting all the *κυδος* he deserved from a judicious reporter of proper principles; that journal contained the following passage:—

“ Mr. Danvers Burton said a few words, the import of which we were quite unable to understand, on account of the noise and confusion in the House at the time.”

He was mortified beyond expression. So it is, that a man who has sufficient firmness to endure misfortune, and philosophy to bear with real calamities, suffers himself to be agitated by the slightest attack on his *amour propre*; he was worried and disappointed. Intelligence reached him early in the morning that the widow of his uncle had put her case into the hands of a young enterprising barrister, who was sanguine of success, and convinced of the

genuineness of the later document. Captain Stubbs was one of the witnesses, and two servants the other witnesses to the signature; they were all producible, and the Podgers' faction became proportionably elated. The politics of old Podgers assimilated with the plebeians near Milford Park, and as the probability of the advancement of his family strengthened, the unpopularity of Danvers increased; and "upstart," "mushroom," and several other less courteous epithets, were applied to his once loved name, and that of his intrinsically excellent wife.

In the following week poor Danvers received his long-expected news from the West Indies. Not only did the market-price afford him no hope of income, but in addition to all other mishaps, a hurricane had afflicted the island in which his estates were situated, and the whole of his crops, many stores, mills, and much live-stock, human and bestial, had fallen victims to the fury of the elements. So entire had been the destruction, that his agent there had been obliged to draw largely upon him, to repair the mischief which had been done, and

Danvers found himself, on the 25th of March, without one shilling of ready-money.

He was at this juncture strongly advised to sell his West Indian property altogether; but as in all such contracts there must be a *vendee* as well as a *vendor*, and there appearing no probability of finding a purchaser, unless indeed his own agent would consent to take the property off his hands, a difficulty was started even to that arrangement. Messrs. Rundell and Bridge did him the favour just at this period to refresh his memory; nor were Messrs. France and Banting, nor Messrs. Leader and Maberly, nor Messrs. Paxton and Marjoribanks, nor Messrs. Hancock and Shepherd, at all backward in giving him gentle hints, that, as if by a fatality quite unaccountable, they all, each and every one of them, had “a large sum of money to make up early in May, and should feel particularly obliged by his enabling them to do so with greater convenience.”

Plagued, tormented, and worried, his health and spirits gave way together. The late hours of Farliament—the air and habits of London—the perpetual worry of his affairs—his clear

perception of the impositions practised upon him every hour, without the power of checking them, unless he chose to subject himself to the mortifying exhibition of the words “Spy” and “Spooney” upon his own walls—his tender distress about his wife, whose appearance too plainly denoted the alteration in her constitution—the dread that she should commit herself, by any unfashionable expression or behaviour, in the society to which she was now daily and nightly abandoned without his guardianship—the perpetual fidget to make great connexions—the alarm lest his children should not be beautiful—the interest he felt about Fanny’s teeth and Emma’s foot—the pumpings and thumpings, and skippings and dippings, that were inflicted upon poor Rosa to procure her a complexion—the tutors and teachers, actors, preachers, lecturers, and surgeons, who were employed upon dear little Kitty’s impediment—filled not only his head, but his house; while the noises made by the different professors, first of music, then of dancing, and then of drilling, (performed by a serjeant-major of the Grenadier Guards,) kept the whole of the superb mansion in Grosvenor-square in a

perpetual whirl; not to speak of the eternal quarrellings and disputings of the servants, the immoveable obstinacy of the cook and his assistants, and the lavish extravagance of the house-steward and his *staff*!

Every body connected with the establishment appeared to have entered into a league to ascertain the most rapid mode of dissipating a large fortune for a careless master. His stables were an epitome of the system: every horse he had, ate at least six pecks of corn *per diem*, and, on an average, two horses died per month. He had no control over the department, and felt it would be far beneath his station, to enquire into the economy of a corn-bin; the consequence was, that, according to the old proverb, "every thing went to rack and manger;" and, alas! this proverb applied not to the stables alone.

Grand dinners were given in succession, and grand parties and grand banquets; but there were drawbacks to the joys he had anticipated, and at one time even felt, which those who thought his contracted brow and snow-pale cheek had been always natural to him, did not perceive. Never did the gold vases

glitter in his view, but the recollection that they were still unpaid for flashed across his mind. Still, however, the gaiety was continued—new pictures were purchased for the London house, new horses and new carriages for London streets.

In June the cause of “*Danvers v. Danvers*” came on to be tried, and, after a patient investigation, a verdict was given in favour of my hero, who, by legal advice, indicted the Podgers’s witnesses, Captain Stubbs and the servants, for conspiracy and perjury.

His kind heart, however, failed him in the carrying on this business, and having taken advice from his domestic counsellor, his dear Mary, it was agreed to drop the prosecution; the consequence of which determination was an outrageously violent letter from Captain Stubbs; upon the receipt of which Danvers felt it his duty to consult a friend, who recommended that it should be treated with silent contempt: the line of conduct adopted upon this advice, entailed upon him in his own neighbourhood an imputation wholly groundless, but which nevertheless was insisted upon by the Podgerses, who, melancholy to say for

the honour of human nature, found a host of supporters in the county, in those who could not brook the exaltation and prosperity of the Danverses.

The fashionable winter again terminated, and perhaps our readers anticipate the return of the family to Milford Park. But no; it had lost its attraction: it was associated in Danvers's mind with his public defeat—with his bitterest enemies; and he felt quite happy when a first-rate physician recommended sea-bathing to the children—there was a reasonable excuse for avoiding the place which for years had been the object of his ambition, and on which he had lavished so much care and money.

The sea-air and sea-bathing were to regenerate the family: Emma's foot was to be strengthened, Rosa's complexion mended, Angelica's appearance improved, by the excursion; nay, I do not know whether he did not anticipate the correction of Ellen's sinuosity, the perfect regulation of Fanny's teeth, and even the entire cure of poor Kitty's stuttering, by the force of their power and virtue. Brighton was the order of the day, and thither the

family, in I do not know how many carriages, were forthwith conveyed.

It is quite unnecessary to recapitulate the shoppings and drivings, and grillings and dipping which the little community underwent; the innocent *naïvetés* of the children, or the side-long looks which their governesses and nursery-maids cast at the brilliant officers by whom they were encountered, nor would it become me to mention the gracious reception our hero met with from the most gracious as well as most illustrious resident. Suffice it to say, that four or five months flew with rapid wings, and Danvers would hardly have known that Christmas was “come again,” if Messrs. Rundell and Bridge, Messrs. France and Banting, Messrs. Paxton and Marjoribanks, Messrs. Leader and Maberly, Messrs. Hancock and Shepherd, and sundry other equally punctual persons, had not been kind enough to jog his memory by mentioning the large sums of money which they had to make up at *that* season.

To say truth, the bills were becoming serious,—another year’s expenditure—no returns from the West Indies to meet the increased establishment:—it became actually necessary

to take some decided step; and therefore, when the move was made from the coast to Milford Park, which they proposed as a *matter of form* to visit, Danvers, while in London, “overhauled” his affairs, and found that his debts amounted to little less than two hundred thousand pounds!

The first annunciation of this fact staggered him. He that had lived elegantly, and better than elegantly, happily, on three thousand a year, to have expended upwards of half a million of money in eighteen months, without any real addition to his pleasures or his comforts!—it was amazing!—What adequate increase of enjoyment had he to offer to himself, as a set-off to this immense disbursement?

It is true, instead of four horses he had five-and-twenty; but unless, as Sir Boyle Roche said, a man were a bird, he cannot be in two places at once; and no man, except, indeed, the late Mr. Astley, who rode three at once, can use more than one horse at a time. Gold was a more valuable article than iron-stone, but did the viand taste better, was the meat more nourishing from the one than the other?—He had magnificent pictures, at which he

never looked—his wife had the finest jewels in London, which it would be absurd, except on special occasions, to wear. What, then, had he done with his enormous wealth? He had rivalled the Duke of Alverstoke, and, like the little animal who is said to expose himself the more the higher he jumps, he had expended upwards of five hundred thousand pounds!

All this, when reflected upon, soured Danvers's temper. He felt that aching sensation, that sickening pang, which those who have wasted what can never be retrieved, are sure, sooner or later, to experience; and yet, after a whole day's conversation with his lawyer and his banker, and after having made sundry sage and salutary resolutions, the thought that the Duke of Alverstoke would rejoice in his distress, and the Podgers's exult at his fall, flashed across his mind, and he resolved to fight on, and hope for better times.

His wife, whose tenderness was the most sensitive, felt that there *was* an alteration in his manner towards her, an abstractedness of mind, a diversion from the pleasures of home, and a perpetual anxiety for motion, which she

never had observed before in him. He would travel—he was seized with a desire to go to Rome;—then the inconvenience of moving so large and young a family—then Mrs. Danvers's expected confinement, would interfere;—then the boy who was to be born was to excite new interest and new exertion—then he would sell his town house and all its appurtenances, and retire entirely to Milford Park—yet still that plan would expose him to remark;—in short, he was in one perpetual worry from morning till night, and not a minute passed but something connected either with his fortune, or what he considered the “duties of his station,” occurred to mar the enjoyment of the present, embitter the recollection of the past, and cloud his prospects of the future.

He had, it is true, a consolation in his excellent and amiable wife; her character had undergone less alteration by her change of situation than Danvers's:—still amiable, still unaffected, still inartificial, she never recurred even in feeling, to the fact that her husband's fortune was acquired by his connexion with her; by no act, by no expression, did she remind him that *she* was the source of his wealth and importance; she felt that her own re-

spectability was to be maintained in the world by the respectability of her husband. She married him because she loved him ; and the addition to her wealth was, as we saw, only acceptable as it afforded him additional happiness. She never interfered in financial matters, and her delicacy was such, that she would not even when anxious for her Danvers's sake, enquire into any thing connected with the subject. An allusion, or a question, appeared to her, like calling Danvers to account, as if he were merely the steward of *her* property instead of the possessor of a property of his own ;—to shackle him even with a suggestion she felt would deteriorate from his respectability ; while *he*, conscious that the wealth was greatly diminished by mismanagement, dreaded to open the state of affairs to her, lest she, with a decision and fortitude to which he felt he ought to yield (but which he also felt he had not courage to exercise), should draw the line at once, and proportion their expenditure to their diminished income.

Thus, out of their *excessive happiness* arose the first distrust—the first concealment which ever existed between this truly exemplary pair.

The sale of the West India property was again agitated; but, pressing as were his necessities, he endeavoured to avert it till the termination of another year, hoping that something might occur, of which there was not the smallest chance, to prevent a measure which he felt he could not adopt without communicating it to his hitherto unsuspecting wife.

Taking, therefore, Danvers's real feelings, his real necessities, the artificial smiles he was constrained to wear, the still continued parties which he felt bound to give, the still swelling bills which he knew he must pay, his undeserved unpopularity, his thirst for fame, his failure in Parliament, arising from the perplexity of his private affairs, his ardent desire for a son and heir, and the intelligence for *the eighth time* given him that Mrs. Danvers had presented him with *another little girl*,—taking all these together, I think I may fairly say, there never was a much more unhappy man in existence.

And yet, with all the experience he had so dearly purchased, with the heaps of rarities and *bijoux* he possessed, with the sicklied indifference he felt towards them when once in his cabinet, so strong upon him was the ardour

of patronizing, so powerful the desire of being looked up to as a connoisseur and the ready purchaser of any thing *unique*, that not a picture-dealer, not a curiosity-hunter in London, if seeking to be known himself, was unknown to Danvers: the first copy of their catalogues was always sent to him, even before publication; not a noseless statue from Italy, not a high-dried mummy from Egypt arrived in the metropolis, but was first offered to him; and—with all his experience in the pleasure derivable from the possession of such relics, if the smallest idea of competition could be started, (which, as the dealers soon found out their man, there never failed to be,) he never failed to buy:—his collections were immense, and the delight of lending one or two of his pictures annually to the British Gallery, and having his name published forth in the list of aristocratic contributors to that meritorious establishment, amply compensated to him for the disbursement of thousands.

Towards the end of the season, poor man! he became so entirely destitute of means, that he resolved upon a step which he felt he could take without consulting his Mary; he determined to raise one hundred thousand pounds

by way of annuities secured upon the Milford Park property, and accordingly entered into negotiations—not with Howard and Gibbs, as most of his friends did,—but with his own lawyers, who, for the trifling consideration of fifteen thousand pounds per annum, procured the necessary sum, which was distributed amongst his craving tradesmen, and with which he paid for the gold plate:—he now viewed the glittering gewgaws with more complacency than before; although it must be confessed the mere safe custody of such valuable gear became a source of perpetual solicitude.

The hundred thousand pounds, however, calmed all his immediate uneasinesses, and it never struck him that in twelve months a sum of fifteen thousand pounds certain was to be paid to the benevolent lenders, and moreover, that in each succeeding year the same amount would be due. If it had, considering that he calculated his annual income at little more than twenty-five thousand pounds nett, it would, perhaps, have puzzled him to understand how he was to live on at his present rate, which was somewhat about five thousand a year more than his present receipt.

His dear Mary recovered from her confinement the same happy contented being as ever; but even she at length was doomed to share in the worries of her husband. News arrived from the West Indies of the total failure of his crops; the accumulated expenses of the property were consequently such, that, by the advice of all his counsellors, including Mary, the estates were sold. The sale of them took place about six months after the first proposition, and they were purchased for seventy-two thousand pounds by Danvers's agent on the spot; since which period, report says, there have been no hurricanes, that the crops have never failed—but, on the contrary, it has been the most productive property in any of our occidental colonies.

This supply of seventy-two thousand pounds came seasonably: but alas! an answer had been received from the jewellers to a note sent to their shop by Mrs. Danvers, which clearly indicated to her that her diamonds were yet unpaid for. Her distress of mind at this—the earnestness with which she communicated her feelings to Danvers, were daggers to him: he was conscious that his embarrassments were

coming thick and threefold upon him — that he actually wanted *all* the produce of the West India property; but his Mary's feelings had been hurt, her pride—*her* pride, dear soul!—had been offended—there was not a moment's hesitation: a flourishing cheque for the vast amount of the bill was drawn upon the banker into whose hands the money had been paid only the day before, and the jewellers realized the sum total with which Danvers was chargeable.

In this feverish state things rolled on for nearly another year: Milford Park remained unoccupied; the annuities chargeable upon it became payable—but, alas, no assets were forthcoming: the sufficient sum was advanced by the solicitors: Mrs. Danvers's (or rather now Mrs. Stubbs's) annuity was paid—the household current expenses, and Mary's pin-money—but, alas, no balance in hand for the expenditure of the year:—a curious document, assuming to be a wine-merchant's bill, was laid before Danvers for his inspection, the items in which were written in a beautiful running hand, perfectly illegible, but which bore at its foot, as a sum total, four figures very like these—£5281 : 0 : 0.

It seemed large—larger than he expected,

but in order to correct the unintelligible document, he took the trouble to check it himself by the cellar-books, instead of submitting it to the steward, and thus by a strict comparison of one thing which he could not read with another which he did not understand, satisfied himself of the correctness of the charge—the only step he was at present able to take in regard to its adjustment.

This, it was clear, could not last long: a dissolution of Parliament demanded his attention to the “Tuneful Nine,” whose voices he had gained, and who were his present constituents, but he found that even there he was likely to be worried: yet perhaps my reader is not quite prepared for the measure which he founded upon the intelligence that it might cost him seven or eight thousand pounds to secure his interest in Penfold—it was neither more nor less than *again standing for the County*.

To this, be it observed, he was in some sort urged by Mary, who, still ignorant of the real state of his affairs, took it into her head that he abstained from contesting the representation from a delicacy towards *her money*; so that the concealment begot deception, and

the deception led to an act of folly so gross and so glaring, that an application to my Lord Chancellor seemed the only fit remedy for my hero's disease.

Danvers balanced the probable expense of the contest for the county with the sum required to ensure his interest in Penfold, and concluded his deliberations by deciding that the difference in the honour was greater than the difference in the cost; that perhaps Sir Oliver's fortune could not sustain another shock like the last; and that, in fact, he would make the struggle, and gratify Mary by presenting himself to the notice of the electors.

Now he began to repent of his long absence from Milford Park, the neglect of county connexions, and his distaste for that beautiful residence. Orders were sent to prepare for the family's reception—placards were posted all over the neighbourhood, announcing his intention of offering himself—the front dining-parlour in Grosvenor-square was turned into a committee-room, the back-parlour converted into a sort of tavern; and while his sanguine friends were arranging things in town, he proceeded to canvass the county in person.

It is quite impossible to describe the personal abuse and invective with which he was loaded in hand-bills and posting-bills, circular letters and advertisements. Allusions to his alleged backwardness in regard to Captain Stubbs, the mystery of the dog-soup, the nicknames of Jerry and Spooney (alluding to the control which his wife was supposed to have over him), a detail of the menagerie, slaps at his mode of acquiring a fortune, barbarity to his uncle's widow, with an agreeable episode about a 'Forged Will:'—all were printed and published, and moreover sent enclosed (clearly by the Podgers's) to Mrs. Danvers, whose eyes betrayed to her husband, when he returned from his fruitless toil of canvassing, that her heart had been half broken. She showed him the papers: he treated them with the most philosophical contempt, laughed at them, but was unhappy for the rest of the evening; first, that his Mary should have been distressed, and secondly, and chiefly, that she should have been informed of his great unpopularity.

One day, when reposing himself after a long search for votes, he, the once volatile, lively

Danvers, seemed completely overcome; and the weight upon his mind was so apparent, that Mary could not avoid pressing him to tell her the cause.

“Why, my dear girl,” said he, “it is strange that *I*, who can bear great evils with calmness, should be so completely upset by a comparative trifle; yet I have seen a scene of wretchedness to-day, which has impressed itself so deeply on my mind, that it quite absorbs my attention—I had no idea of the existence of such misery.”

Mary begged him to make her a partner of his feelings.

“Well, then,” said Danvers, “in canvassing the southern part of the county to-day alone, I was directed to a cottage which belonged to a freeholder—Davis is his name. Upon knocking, I was admitted into a room, where sat, with his face hidden in his hands, his arms resting upon his knees, an old grey-headed man, the father of the family: a death-like stillness pervaded the wretched place. Opposite to the old man sat his son, his eyes cast down and full of tears: he did not raise them at my entrance; a little girl had opened the

door—she bade me ‘hush’ as I went in. I mentioned my name—my business there. The old man started up, looked wildly at me as if alarmed, and then respectfully shaking his aged head, said, ‘Don’t ask me, Sir.’

“Attracted by the singularity of such a reply, I enquired farther.

“It turned out, that his daughter, who, as he said, was dying in the room above, had been engaged to be married to a young and industrious man of our neighbourhood: that this man had embarked in trade, and had contracted a debt with our mortal foe, your uncle’s father-in-law, who liberally advanced him money at what appears to me exorbitant interest.

“For this the young man had given a bond with what is called a Judgment; so that, in failure of payment, both his person and property were subject to his creditor.

“Upon a misunderstanding between the amiable widow of your poor uncle and this unfortunate young person (the bond being over due), attributable, I suspect, to some little-minded jealousy on her part of the poor girl, Podgers acted upon the Judgment, and having stripped the young man of his property, threw

him into the county gaol; the daughter of poor Davis, whose health was delicate, received so violent a shock, that she is hardly expected to recover, and was actually dying for want of medical advice, which her father had not the means of procuring. My heart ached to think that so much wickedness should have caused so much wretchedness."

"I know what you did, dearest Danvers," said Mary.

"I think you may guess, my life," replied her husband; "I gave the son a cheque on the bank here, for the sum for which his intended brother-in-law was immured in prison, and desired him to carry Kilman over to his sister, and I gave all I had about me to poor old Davis, whose heart is, I trust, lighter to-night than it was when I lifted his latch."

"After all," exclaimed Mary, "the real pleasure of having money is the power it gives of doing good."

"Yes," answered the benevolent Danvers, "I felt more delight at the moment I saw the tears of joy, and heard the prayers of gratitude, which *I* had excited in these poor people, than I have known for years."

“ And Heaven will bless you for it !” added Mary, and she looked at her husband with an expression something very like adoration.

The hatred which the Podgerses had inspired in Danvers’s heart, this little history had increased to perfect detestation ; and the incident took such hold upon him, that he could not shake it off for a length of time.

The day of election came : the old farce was re-acted. Sir Oliver Freeman again was cheered, Danvers again was hooted ; but after a campaign of fifteen days, the result, *mirabile dictu*, was different from the last, and our hero found, at four o’clock on the last day, the state of the poll to be,

Freeman	.	.	.	.	.	2208
Danvers	.	.	.	.	.	2136
Mumford	.	.	.	.	.	1841

Whereupon a car was produced, swords were girded on, and the new knights of the shire were paraded through the streets ; Danvers, fortunately escaping the pelting which he had anticipated, by being placed in the same vehicle with the popular candidate, was only saluted in his progress with the old cries of

“Spooney” and “Jerry,” and the admirable joke about the “dead dogs.”

Nothing particular occurred at the election, if I except the polling of Mr. Podgers, who ostentatiously gave his vote to Danvers, offering loudly his reason for so doing. “I give Mr. Danvers my vote, because, though I hate the man and his politics, he is a sort of connexion of my own, and I think the only way of keeping him out of prison is to put him into Parliament.”

This little pithy speech was received with great delight by the mob, who hailed Mr. Podgers on his descent from the hustings with the approving cry of “Well done, old Jolly-chaps.”

If this mortified Danvers, for he heard it all, he was amply repaid by seeing his poor humble friend Davis a new man: he came to give him his vote, his countenance beaming with smiles—an altered creature: his daughter’s disease had been chiefly mental; care and medical attendance, and, more than all, the liberation of her intended husband, were rapidly restoring her; and the old man promised that she should go

to Milford Park the moment she was well enough, and return her personal thanks to her kind restorer and benefactor.

So far all terminated satisfactorily, and although upwards of thirty thousand pounds had been again spent upon the vanity, still the end was attained—the point was carried—the bills—one alone for ribands, amounted to upwards of two thousand pounds, besides four hundred and fifty more, for pins to make up the favours—were heavy, and there was no great store of money to pay them with.

Indeed, the representations on this head were so strong and pressing, that our hero was compelled to raise forty thousand pounds more upon the Somersetshire property, and was given to understand, when granting annuities to the amount of five thousand pounds, that it was the last sum raiseable upon that estate, which, except as a matter of fancy, was not worth more than the hundred and forty thousand already raised upon it.

It would be useless to detail the various impertinences of the Podgers faction during the stay of the Danverses in Somersetshire, or the

vulgar assumption of Captain Stubbs, or the jokes which were made upon the style of the "rich relations;" it is only necessary that my readers should understand how perfectly the reverse of agreeable their residence was made, and that it was with unfeigned pleasure Mary found herself and her children again in London, where the house had undergone a thorough repair of the damages done by the committee and their retainers, and which had, amongst other good qualities, the advantage of being more than an hundred and twenty miles from the hated Podgerses.

Parliament resumed its sittings; Danvers took the oaths and his seat, and enjoyed the satisfaction of representing one of the most opulent counties in England. But, alas, short was the rapture, and brief the delight: Mr. Mumford presented a petition against his return on the score of bribery, and a committee was forthwith appointed to try its merits. Danvers literally was astounded—first, at the petition—secondly, at the allegations contained in it. Time, however, wore on, and the committee assembled; Danvers anxiously attended, and the members having been sworn and seated,

Mr. Glibley, who was of counsel for the petitioner, after a speech, brief, but somewhat redundant, as Danvers thought, in coarse allusions, informed the committee that he concluded it would answer all the purposes he had in view, and save much of their valuable time, if he substantiated the fact of bribery in one case, not but that he had abundance of evidence to the fact in many instances.

An according nod from the chairman gave the assent to the proposal, and after a little whispering and moving about, the committee-room door opened, and who should appear, in the witness-box at the end of the table, but our poor friend George Davis.

George Davis sworn. — Examined by Mr. Glibley.

“What is your name?”

“George Davis, Sir.”

“What are you, Mr. Davis?”

“I’m a bit of a farmer, Sir.”

“Living near Mapleford.”

“Yes, Sir, close agin Mapleford.”

“And you are a bit of a freeholder arn’t you Mr. Davis, as well as a bit of a farmer?”

“Yes, Sir, I am.”

"Pray, now, did you vote at the last election for your county?"

"I did, Sir."

"For whom did you vote, Sir?"

"Squire Danvers."

"Do you know Squire Danvers personally?"

"I do; he is sitting opposite to me at the table with his hat on."

"Did Mr. Danvers ever call upon you previously to the election?"

"Yes, Sir, about seven or eight days before; it was on a Wednesday about two o'clock, leastwise about half-past two—I know it was Wednesday, because my boy had been to market, and ——"

"Well, well, never mind your boy; we want to know something more about yourself. What did Mr. Danvers say to you when he visited you in this extraordinary kind, good-natured, way, eh?"

"He told me who he was, and what he wanted."

"What he wanted?—Oh! he told you what he wanted, did he?—umph—And pray, now, what was it he wanted?"

"He wanted me to vote for him."

“ Oh! he did; he wanted you to vote for him? And pray, Mr. Dawson ——”

“ Davis, Sir.”

“ Davis, I mean; what might you say when the Squire asked you for your vote?”

“ I told him I could not give it him; my poor da'ter was then ill in bed, and my mistress ——”

“ We don't want to know any thing about you *da'ter*, or your mistress, as you call her, you told Mr. Danvers you could not vote for him?”

“ Yes, I did; because ——”

“ There—there—we do not want to know your reasons—you refused, did you?”

“ Yes; but then my da'ter——”

“ My good man, we know your *da'ter* could not vote; we want to know what *you* did in this business. You say you refused your vote to Mr. Danvers? now, whom did you say you voted for at the election?”

“ For Mr. Danvers, Sir, I gi'ed him a plumper.”

“ Pray now, Mr. Daniels ——”

“ Davis, Sir.”

“ Davis — I mean Davis — pray now, Mr.

Davis, I hope you will not be extremely angry with the question I am going to put.—Did Squire Danvers give you any thing while he was at your house?"

"Yes, Sir, he did."

"What did he give you—fifty pound, eh?"

"Yes, Sir, more than that, God bless him!"

A murmur here arose amongst the Committee, whose heads began to move towards each other as if they were trying to knock their neighbours' hats off; the two or three outsides began writing notes, and handing them inwards—

"More than fifty pounds, you say? How much more?"

"His honour gave me eighteen pounds for myself, and a draft on the Milford bank for a hundred and twenty, which my son took, and got the money for the same day, and then he went and——"

"Stop, stop; we don't care where *he* went, or what *he* did. Is your son a freeholder?"

"No, Sir."

"Well, then, we won't trouble you for any information about him.—And so you took this money?"

"Yes, Sir."

“ And voted for Mr. Danvers, Sir ?”

“ Don’t answer that question unless you like it,” said a grave looking barrister, who was retained by Danvers.

“ We can prove the fact by the poll-book,” said Glibley, leaning over the table ; “ my learned friend here is more careful of the witness than he appears to be of himself.”

And here a discussion ensued, which lasted about an hour and a quarter, as to whether the witness should answer this question, it having been previously decided to the satisfaction of all parties, that it did not make the slightest difference one way or the other, whether he did or did not, most particularly and especially because he had actually *done* so twice, at least, a quarter of an hour before.

This last fact happening to be remarked upon, by a little boy who had been brought into the room by his father to see a council of British senators assembled in deliberation, the child was overheard by the learned gentleman who supported the question, and that learned gentleman hinted the fact to his learned opponent, who mentioned it to the committee, who put an end to the discussion desiring the examination might go on.

“ Well, Mr. Davis,” said Glibley, “ I suppose you know the laws of your country ?”

“ I hope, Sir, I do.”

“ You hope you do ?—Why then, Sir, if you do, as the law and I suppose you do, and as you hope you do, there is the less excuse for the conduct you have been guilty of, and I can promise you, on the part of my client, that you shall be proceeded against at common law.”

“ For what ? proceeded against for being grateful !”

“ Ah, that is a mighty simple unsophisticated mode of putting it, but ——”

“ Putting what, Sir ?” said the agitated old man. “ Mr. Danvers saved my child,—saved her—and lifted us all from misery to happiness. His charity ——”

“ My good man,” said the chairman of the Committee, “ we have nothing to do with charity here—you may go down.”

“ Perhaps,” said Glibley, “ my learned friend would like to ask him a few questions.”

“ If you please,” said his learned friend.

“ Pray, Davis, did Mr. Danvers solicit your vote before he gave you the money ?”

“ The first thing as ever he did, Sir, was to

ask for my vote; to which I said I could not, because ——”

“ I object to his telling us his motives. Did Mr. Danvers make his giving you money conditional upon your voting?”

“ When he went away, says he, ‘ Well, then, *now*, Davis, I suppose you will give me your vote,’ meaning ——”

“ Ah, we don’t want you to find meaning, my good friend,” said Glibley.

“ Yes, but we *do* want the meaning,” said the elderly gentleman.

And here ensued another discussion of some forty minutes, which concluded by its being ruled to be quite impossible that Davis should be allowed to put *his* construction upon Mr. Danvers’s conduct, which seemed to the chairman of the committee and his honourable colleagues, perfectly to explain itself. Davis was ordered down—the poll-books were produced, certified—Davis’s vote pointed out; a clerk from the Milford bank proved the payment of the draft mentioned by Davis to his son, and proved that such payment was made after the dissolution of parliament, and before the return of the writ.

All this appeared conclusive enough ; strangers were directed to withdraw, and at five o'clock the Committee reported that T. B. Danvers, Esq. had been guilty of bribery, and that E. Mumford, Esq. the petitioner, was duly elected.

At no period of Danvers's life had he experienced so serious a mortification as this ; it seemed as if he was doomed to be eternally misrepresented. As, in his conduct to old Danvers, his very anxiety to please, gave the offence which had entailed upon him the wretched connexion with the Podgerses, so here an act of pure and disinterested charity, which his wife considered the ultimatum of excellence and liberality, was the cause of his discomfiture in a favourite object, and, moreover, was published to the world by the Commons House in Parliament assembled, as a proof of conduct at once dishonourable and illegal.

Whatever his feelings at the first blush of the business might have been, they certainly were not weakened when he was informed, that, besides being incapacitated from sitting in *that* parliament, criminal proceedings were

to be instituted against him and his partner in crime !

Mr. Podgers's observation on the hustings, however coarse, had much of truth in it ; and Danvers's creditors, now he was out of the House, and consequently tangible, became less patient and less delicate in their expressions of anxiety for payment. Still he could not endure that retrenchment should follow so closely upon public defeat, as it would evidently corroborate the county rumours about his distress for money, which had begun to circulate in something above a whisper. Thus the very fear of *appearing* ruined when *he was not*, induced him to incur the danger of being ruined in earnest.

To part with Milford—for that had occurred to him—was, indeed, a measure in which every feeling was so vitally interested, that he dreaded even the consideration of it. He thought it best at all events, to conquer his scruples with respect to his wife, and open his heart to *her* on the present precarious state of his affairs.

This decided and acted upon, he felt himself greatly relieved by the candid disclosure, which was as entirely a surprise to Mary as the pur-

chase of the same place had been before, though of a somewhat different nature. As he foresaw, she recommended immediate retrenchment, but checked herself in the advocacy of such a measure, lest she should give Danvers the idea that she was anxious about money ; so that even the benefits likely to arise from the unreservedness of one party, were in a measure weakened by the delicacy of the other.

At length, after several weeks of harassing events, it was resolved as the *denouement* must come, that it was useless protracting the period of its arrival ; and the fashionable world were early in May petrified by an announcement of the approaching sale of Milford Park and the contiguous estates, together with all the superb furniture, collection of pictures, library of choice and valuable books, cellar of wines, live and dead stock, &c. &c.

It would be impossible to adequately describe Danvers's feelings as he read the recapitulation of all his "pretty things," collected with such care and cost, in the Morning Post, and saw them doomed to be scattered over the wide world, profaned by the gaze and touch of the vulgar,—his books distin-

guished by the many-quartered shield,—his pictures too—he looked paler and more wretched than ever; but when the sale actually came, and Milford Park, and all the furniture, and all the books, and all the pictures, and every thing together, produced less than one hundred thousand pounds, and that the guaranty given by the bankers and solicitors to the annuitants, was called for by those agreeable persons in consequence:—he was paralyzed!—Ruin appeared before him at once in all its horrors!

The depreciation of the value of the Somersetshire property arose in the first place from the unserviceable nature of the estate. The pictures which he purchased as Rubenses, Corregios, and Vandykes, were copies painted at Brompton and Lambeth. The gentleman who parted with them, had retired to Switzerland; and his friend, who furnished the apartments with *antiques* by De Ville in the Strand, *Cameos* by Tassie, and *Herculaneum relics* by Wedgewood, was the partner of his retreat. At all events, every thing was gone—property, place and all; and still nearly fifty thousand pounds remained to be paid on account of it!

Something decisive was now to be done. The

annuitants had fallen foul of the bankers, who applied summarily to Danvers. What means had he?—half mad, and dreading the consequences, he repaired to his solicitors. His agitation was not concealed from Mary; she remained but a short time after him, and while he was gone to endeavour to obtain time, she drove to the banking-house, and in a private interview with the head of the firm, gave him her jewels, with an entreaty that he would dispose of them instantly, without consulting her husband, and carry the proceeds to his credit. She was not aware of the sum still secured to her in the funds, and saw no other means of averting the impending destruction of her beloved Danvers.

The banker, it may be imagined, refused to deprive a lady of such favourite ornaments, and undertook to arrange the business in some more satisfactory way. Not he: bankers, like surgeons, must, in their vocation, put *feeling* out of the question. Instead of attempting to dissuade her from the measure as rash or precipitate, he complimented her upon her discretion and good sense, and taking the cases which she proffered, very carefully deposited

them in a large iron chest, and, banging down its heavy lid, to the utter confusion of nerves and the *membrana tympani*, excluded for ever from the sight of our poor heroine the glittering baubles which had once formed so essential a part of her husband's happiness.

When she told Danvers what she had done, his delight at having such an amiable wife, almost immediately gave way to the mortification of losing such beautiful diamonds, and he determined, if possible, still to save them. He wrote and dispatched a letter to the banker at his private house, begging him not to part with the *darling* jewels;—but the banker was too quick for him, *they had been sold* during the morning to an eminent diamond-merchant, and twenty-nine thousand pounds had been carried to the credit side of his account in consequence.

Twenty-nine thousand for what had cost forty-eight!—and twenty-nine too, to satisfy upwards of fifty! More reductions were necessary, and it was now evident that a general break-up must take place. The family retired to Brighton, still unshorn of its apparent splendour, bating the jewels, which few people

saw; and the house in Grosvenor-square forthwith followed the property in the West—gold plate and silver plate; brown horses and black horses, white horses and grey, more wines, more glasses, more pictures, more phaetons, went to the hammer, and after the dispersion of all his effects, and the payment of all his creditors, Danvers found himself in the possession of twenty-two thousand pounds in cash, and estates in London, Hertfordshire, and Sussex, producing about two thousand four hundred pounds per annum, the greater part of which he had bound himself to pay to Mrs. Stubbs for the term of her natural life by half yearly payments; of whom, moreover, he had the satisfaction of hearing twice in every twelve months, that she was in the best possible health.

The worry of all these proceedings was hardly equal in its effect upon Danvers to the treatment which he met with from his *quondam* friends; ridicule of his pretensions, of his affected taste and judgment, of his style of living, of his airs and those of his “poor little stupid wife,” was lavished on him in newspapers, and magazines; epigrams and puns

were made upon his fall—and so powerful was the operation of these events upon his constitution, that when he was sentenced to a twelve-month's imprisonment and to pay a fine of two thousand pounds for having relieved a poor man's distress at a most unfortunately critical juncture, his ill-health was admitted as a sufficient plea for remitting the imprisonment and increasing the fine, which punishment was as little suited to his shattered fortune as the other was to his broken constitution.

It was at this stage of their lives that Mrs. Burton Danvers gave to the fond eyes of her devoted husband *a fine boy*, whose arrival at a period *when there was nothing for him to inherit*, gave his unhappy father nearly as much of uneasiness as he would have felt of pleasure, had his appearance been announced a few years earlier.

It became at all events necessary for Danvers to fix upon some permanent residence. Milford was gone, Grosvenor-square was no longer his—and since all disguise of circumstances, after the *éclat* of his magnificent sales, was vain, he set about making enquiries for some retreat to which he might retire to reflect

upon past scenes, not quite despondingly with regard to the future.

He heard of a cottage in Devonshire, one of those *cottages*, wherein "pride dwells which apes humility," and with which, according to Mr. Southey, the Devil is mightily pleased; it had been the property of a merchant in London, who, having embarked in some ill-judged speculations, had become bankrupt, and the place was to be sold for the benefit of the creditors. It had its lawns and shrubberies, its conservatory and its stables, its farm attached, its hot-house and its ice-house, and all its little *agrémens*; but Mary's gentle heart was pained to think that she should enjoy the results of care and attention bestowed upon it by its unfortunate owner; and the picture of the wretched man and his family, driven into beggary and distress from their favourite home, was so deeply imprinted on her mind that she could not conquer an apprehension she entertained of never being happy in the possession of it.

When, however, the auctioneer, who had the disposal of it, informed her that the late owner had, since the utter ruin which compelled

him to part with Rosehill, removed from one of the rural streets near Russell-square, in which he formerly lived, to a mansion in Grosvenor-place; that he had moreover since stood a contested election, and was on the eve of being created a baronet, she conquered her scruples, and in six months after the birth of her first son, found herself established comfortably and happily in her new residence; a perfect bower of content, somewhat on the plan of dear Sandown, larger of course, proportionate to the increase of her family, but the same taste predominating, the same quietude prevailing.

The butlers and stewards were dismissed; the *maîtres d'hotel* and grooms of the chambers discarded; the cooks cashiered, and the lacqueys unliveried: two men-servants, besides the coachman and gardeners, formed the small domestic force—the female servants and governesses were in number adequate to the wants and wishes of a well-conducted family, and Danvers and his Mary felt the real happiness of life with a competency.

Their income, reduced as it was, afforded every rational luxury, even that of doing good; and brought back by circumstances to that

station in society which they had so well filled, and to those pursuits to which their characters and dispositions were so well suited, her growing family again became the object of Mary's personal superintendence, and she, the mild, the gentle, amiable and domestic wife. Danvers's mind, reposed in the sweetness of his retirement, seemed to regain its energies; his temper its evenness and placidity.

Their new residence seemed like a haven, where, though not actually driven to it by stress of weather, they had anchored after a long and diversified voyage; the children, removed into pure air and under the eye of their mother, improved in health and appearance; Emma outgrew her lameness, Rosa gained a complexion, Helen's figure strengthened into gracefulness, and Angelica herself looked almost pretty.

As these darlings of his heart were one summer's evening grouped around him, and his Mary held her infant boy upon her knee, his feelings overcame him; he pressed his children closer towards him, and exclaimed:—

“How fervently do I thank my God that

by his providence I have been taught what to value in this transitory world, and what reject—that I have seen and known the worthlessness of wealth, and find the real value of virtue and religion. In my career through life, full of the weakness of my nature, I have committed innumerable indiscretions—I was proud, I was ambitious, and my pride was not untainted by envy; but the chastening hand of Heaven has been on me; and I have been taught by the events to which our exaltation gave rise, that worldly goods cannot ensure happiness, and that, if there is little on earth to create pride, there is still less to excite envy.

“It is here, my children,” said Danvers, pointing to his wife, “it is here that I possess my treasure; to your mother I owe, not only the means by which I have purchased the blessed experience now so beneficial to myself and these my dearest and best beloved, but to her am I indebted for the correction of all my indiscretions, for the excitement and encouragement of every right feeling which I possess.”

“ It is,” continued he, “ in the possession of a fond, faithful, and amiable wife, and such dear pledges as these which now surround me, with the power of doing good, and the blessings of that peace of mind which the Disposer of all events vouchsafes to those who devoutly seek it, that man possesses real happiness upon earth. So far from contentment resulting from extensive property—the property itself is a constant source of discontent, while its fruits, in a short time, become tasteless and sickening. Enough and a little to spare, is all that is to be desired, and——”

How much farther Danvers might have gone on with this apostrophization of wealth, I cannot say ; but Mrs. Miles, who had nursed all the children in Mrs. Danvers’s family for the last half century, entering the room to carry off the young heir apparent to bed, at the moment wherein her master paused, privileged by her long standing, took up the speech precisely at the point where he had dropped it, and lifting the dear boy into her arms, and doubling a shawl over “ his noble face ” to prevent his catching cold, said—

“ You are right, Sir, — Enough is as good as a feast; and as I used to say to my poor dear Husband, when he was alive, TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING IS GOOD FOR NOTHING.”

voluptates commendat paucior usus.

THE
FRIEND OF THE FAMILY.

VOL. I.

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As I sketch from the life, and yet have no wish to be personal, I shall not mention the name of the country-town in which, and in the neighbourhood of which, the scene of the following occurrences is laid.

I presume a description of it will be sufficient; and if I have any skill in depicting, and my readers will take the trouble to compare this sketch with such country-towns as they happen to know, they will doubtlessly decide precisely upon that particular one which I mean them to select for the theatre of our action.

My country-town is situated in a valley; it is watered by a river, the river is crossed by a

bridge, over which passes the high London road. In the centre of the main street stands an old "Town Hall," supported by rustic columns without capitals, which columns are ordinarily covered with notices of sales, advertisements of linen-drapery, promises of wealth and glory to aspiring young heroes willing to enlist for the East Indies, and notices of Quarter Sessions, and of Acts of Parliament intended to be applied for.

This Town Hall is ornamented with a clock, which does not go, surmounted by a rusty weathercock; opposite to the clock, and moreover on the shady side of the building, is placed a sun-dial, whose gnomon is distorted, and whose face is adorned with a quaint apothegm.

On one side of the street, somewhat retired from it, stands the church: a neatly trimmed walk leads from the street diagonally to its door, across a cemetery undulating with rustic graves, where sleep the "pride of former days," remembered only by the brief and pithy poems which adorn their grave-stones, or in the hearts of those who loved, and who

are destined, after a little more of trouble, to follow them.

Beyond the church-yard, and accessible by another road, you just see the parsonage, a white and ancient house, having three pointed gables, with towers of chimneys in the intervening vallies of roof. The gardens are prettily laid out, and the river, which you cross on entering the town, (not navigable) runs through them, and looks black in its clearness as it ripples under the thick and tangled foliage of the intermingling trees.

Nearly opposite to the church, somewhat conspicuously placed, stands bolt upright, in all its London pertness, a house, which at the time I commence my narrative, belonged to Mr. Amos Ford, attorney-at-law, and (consequently) gentleman. The door, illustrated by a brass knocker of considerable size, confined towards its knob by a staple, was so contrived as effectually to secure it from the depredations of itinerant wags, who occasionally carry their suburban jests far out of the bills of mortality.

At the corner of the market-place is THE shop, where *every body* buys *every thing*,—full

of flannels, and lace, and tapes, and bonnets, and toys, and trinkets, looking dark, and smelling fustily. On the first floor over it, at the time of which I speak, lodged Captain Hogmore, an officer on the recruiting service, who might be seen every day, Sundays excepted, from ten till two, seated at a table covered with dusty green baize, whereon stood a furred decanter and a squat tumbler, wherein to pour and whereout of to drink, some milky-looking water contained in the bottle, by way of refreshment from his else intermitting labours upon the German flute.

Towards the extremity of the town there stood an "Academy for Young Gentlemen, by the Rev. R. Birch and Assistants;" next door to which was "Mrs. Tickle's Establishment for Young Ladies." This, however, does not say much for the *locality*; for it rarely occurs (*why*, I leave to the saints and sages of this era of enlightenment to decide) that one sees a school for boys without a contiguous seminary for girls.

After you pass the turnpike, you see on your left, Burrowdale Park, the seat of the Right Hon. Lord Belmont, a spacious mansion in the

full uniform of bad taste, red brick with white facings—a pimple on the beautiful face of Nature : in the days of which I treat, not a daisy presumed to lift its head above the smooth surface of the well-mown lawn before it: every thing was niceness, order, and precision; geraniums, tortured over fans in pots of the brightest scarlet, lined the steps which led up to the hall-door, like gentlemen pensioners in the presence-chamber—every thing shone in spotless neatness: the steps themselves were white as snow, and the well-oiled weathercock on the stables, as it silently veered with the wind, glittered in the sun with a bird-dazzling brightness.

The noble owner of Burrowdale was, at the time we begin our history, absent; he had been our minister at a foreign Court for seven years; and had been honoured, in approbation of his conduct, with the Civil Grand Cross of the Bath. During his Lordship's absence, Burrowdale Hall was let furnished to Mr. and Lady Honoria Humbug, who with the three lovely Misses Humbug, usually passed their summer months of September, October, and November, in that dignified retirement.

As, however, our immediate business is with the owner of Burrowdale rather than the tenants, I will endeavour, having described part of the scenery, to elucidate the character of one of my principal actors. Where better can such notice be taken of a noble lord, than upon his own domain?

Lord Belmont, then, was a man about fifty-six years of age; his person and figure marked as aristocratic by the hand of Nature, and, if not vying with the Pagets or the Villierses, still sufficiently handsome and graceful to catch the eye and arrest the attention of those with whom he came in contact.

His Lordship's leading foible was pride—excessive family pride; and this, added to a violent temper and strong passions (which he was from morning till night labouring to control) made his Lordship somewhat less agreeable in private life than he would have been, had he been blessed with humility and a sweet disposition. He had been *apprenticed* to a statesman of some eminence in early life, and had risen through the various grades of subordinate diplomacy, until he consummated his

earthly happiness by procuring for himself the exalted situation which he filled so entirely to his own satisfaction.

His Lordship had married early, and after eight years of unruffled contentment, lost his lady—an event which he bore with the most laudable philosophy and dignified calmness: his only daughter, he forced into a marriage with a Scots baron, a widower, with nine red-headed children, at a moment when he knew her to be devotedly attached to a young officer who, subsequently to her marriage, was killed on the Continent. The poor young lady, after a few months of misery, died of what is vulgarly called a broken heart, that is to say, grief preyed upon her constitution, and she fell a victim to the disorders which it produced,—a circumstance her noble father greatly deplored, but which was observed to have less effect upon his sensibility after he had caused her to be interred in the family vault at Burrowdale, and had placed her coroneted escutcheon over his velvet-trimmed pew in the church.

His Lordship, as it may perhaps be sur-

mised, was one of those curiously constructed persons in whom the passions and the feelings bear no relative proportion to each other: he was hot, impetuous, violent, and even dangerous, as relates to the one—cold, senseless, and immoveable as refers to the other; in his manner to strangers he was stiff, distant, and dignified—to his familiars and inferiors, hasty, haughty, and impetuous; his mind was highly cultivated, nor was he without talent, but custom and formality had greatly contributed to correct any little propensity which he might have had towards gaiety; and the art which he had so long and so assiduously studied, taught him, that sincerity, if a virtue, like other good things, was not always to be made use of—that he was to treat every friend as if he might become an enemy, and that, as he presumed the object of every man who approached, was to deceive him, so the only way to frustrate his designs was to be beforehand with him in deluding. Thus, what with his scheming and the diplomatic jargon in which he invariably delivered himself, it usually turned out that a conversation with his Lordship never led to any decided result, but at

the end of half an hour's dialogue with him a man was pretty nearly in the place whence he had started at the beginning of it.

Amongst the few objects, besides those of his mission, which engaged his Lordship's attention, was one in which, for the honour of his family, he was deeply interested. He had a son—the Honourable Edward Bramley, who, at the period to which I now refer, was finishing his education at Oxford.

At the time of his father's departure, and, indeed, for several years, he had passed his vacations at Emmerton Parsonage; (for since *my* town must have a name, Emmerton is as good a *nom de guerre* as any other.) The Rector of Emmerton was an intimate friend and fellow-collegian of his Lordship, a man, moreover, of family and consequence, brother to an English earl, and cousin to an Irish marquess; and yet, with all these enviable claims to public distinction and the private friendship of my Lord Belmont, he died one day, when, to say truth, he appeared little to expect it, and the vacant living was presented by the Bishop in whose gift it was, to the present incumbent, who, under all the circumstances,

felt no disinclination to permit the young heir of Lord Belmont to continue his domestication at the Rectory during his noble father's absence, having been greatly moved thereunto by Mr. Amos Ford, attorney at law, gent. and manager of all my Lord's affairs, whose name I have already mentioned, and of whom much more hereafter.

The late Rector was—to be sure, he is dead, and *de mortuis*, &c. but I name no names, and if a cap fit, it may as easily be squeezed upon a dead man's head, as upon the head of a man alive;—the late Rector was one of those few exceptions to the piety and excellence of the church of England, upon whom the innovators and disturbers place their hopes of subversion and spoliation; and if he were unfit to be rector of Emmerton, he was still less fit to be the guardian of his friend's heir: the vices of the table were not the only vices laid to his charge, and in the sports of the field, the diversions of the race-course and the cricket-ground, the pastor, Honourable by courtesy, and Reverend by profession, dissipated those hours which should have been devoted to the sacred duties of his holy call-

ing,—a calling no man should hastily adopt, but to which, when once adopted, all ordinary gratifications, all worldly feelings must be subservient.

In the midst of a round of noisy revelry and heartless gaiety, with a wife as *noble* as himself and little better, this thoughtless man was summoned to another world, just in time to save the community, whose spiritual possessions he shamefully mis-governed, from dissensions, disunion, depravity, and demoralization. If vice or indecorum were censured in Emmerton, the rector was quoted as an authority: if sabbath-breaking were adduced as the precursor of destruction, the parsonage itself afforded a horrible palliation; and ridiculous, as it may well be imagined, became the admonitions from the pulpit, or the corrections from the bench, in a place where the clergyman was a libertine, and the magistrate a law-breaker.

Not more refreshing is the balmy rain from heaven after a lengthened drought—not more soothing the gentle breeze after the impetuous hurricane—not more cheering the budding spring after a long and dreary winter, than

the arrival of the late rector's successor was to the people of the parish of Emmerton.

DALLING, (that was the name of the new incumbent), was as opposite to *him* whom he followed, as *he* to all he should have been:—an able scholar, a pious minister, the sick man's hope, the poor man's friend; his house, and his heart, were alike open to the needy and distressed—his life was a round of kind and charitable actions; he practised as he preached, and not content with shewing others the path to heaven, led the way himself.

If excellence be not always hereditary, it seems Dalling's case afforded a proof that it might be sometimes so. He had a daughter—and such a daughter!

Rose Dalling was not a beauty—she had not what a painter would call a fine feature in her face; but she was all loveliness and loveableness—her eyes could talk all languages, her mouth was all smiles—her cheeks full of dimples, and a colour on her cheek

“At which the envious rose grew pale.”

To say that she drew, and sang, and played,

and did all the thousand winning, witching things that well-bred girls do, would, in these days of refinement, be to say nothing; but there was the beautiful veil of modesty flung over all her perfections. Were they called forth naturally, her talents developed themselves inartificially; as were her talents, so were her virtues. She was religious without ostentation, well-read without pretension, and accomplished without being a *show*!

She visited her father's sick and aged parishioners—she established a school, and made favourites of the pretty children whom she clothed and educated. It was a sweet sight to see Rose Dalling training the minds of her infant charges, and teaching them the word by which alone their future happiness could be insured. She looked like some ministering angel new-lighted on the earth, and her bright eyes beamed with a more than worldly radiance, while animated in the cause of the poor orphans whom she sheltered, and in the service of the God whom she adored.

When it is known that such a jewel lay embowered amongst the tall and venerable

trees of Emmerton parsonage, it will not appear, perhaps, surprising that Edward Bramley pressed to be allowed to share the quietude of the family circle; and that, however dazzled and diverted he might have been by the noise and ill-placed revelry of his late *Honourable* and *Reverend* Mentor, the change which brought, instead of wine, and wanton wit, and

“Quips and cranks, and jollity,”—

religion, reason, calmness, beauty, intellectual intercourse, talent and accomplishment—honest cheerfulness, innocent gaiety, and domestic affection, was, to a mind like his, at once striking, winning, and redeeming!

There are thousands of persons in the world whose astonishment will be moved to hear of cheerfulness and gaiety in a house whose inmates were, as I have already said, truly devout. But why should it? The protestant religion does not possess such an attribute as gloom in its whole composition. What a satire is it upon humanity to say, that rational beings—all faculty, all intelligence—should never be cheerful or happy without being necessarily impious!

Is the social union of society irreligious? Is the ardent cultivation of brotherly affection irreligious? Is the exercise of any, of all the Fine Arts, irreligious? Is mirth, excited by no improper means, irreligious? Music, dancing, conversation, or even cards, if not indulged in, with improper views—are these, or any one of these things, irreligious? We should say *no*. It is by the vulgar association of groans and tears, and sighs and melancholy, with virtue and morality, piety and devotion, that persons of weak minds and superficial enquiry either remain during their lives more than *half* atheists, or towards the termination of their career, turn *quite* methodists.

In such society as that of Dalling and his daughter, Bramley found attractions, new as they were fascinating. His terms at Oxford lingered on his hands; and all those academical pursuits, by which time is dissipated, and dissipation of every other sort is promoted in our seats of learning, failed in their wonted effect of shortening the periods of absence from Emmerton, to whose peaceful shades he flew

as the giddy bird, after fluttering wildly in the air, "shuts close his pinions and sinks into the nest."

It seems but natural to infer that whatever excellence, whatever virtue, whatever talent, Edward had discovered in Dr. Dalling, the fact of his having *such* a daughter did by no means weaken the high opinion he had formed of his character and intellect, upon his first acquaintance with him, and it appears to me, who have watched such things, that the arrangement concluded by Mr. Amos Ford for the residence of the young heir at the Parsonage, was not the less agreeable to Rose, when she found in the inmate of her father's house a being all talent, all genius, and all accomplishment.

However this might be, we will not waste time in speculating upon feelings, which may be more advantageously devoted to the narration of facts. For seven months in the year Rose Dalling and Edward Bramley were day after day in the unvarying habit of reading together, drawing together, and walking together; if he returned from shooting, Rose was sure to meet

him at the side-gate of the Rectory-grounds which opens into Burrowdale Park; if he “plied the fisher’s art,” who but Rose was ready to unlock the wicket by the boat-house?—on his return, tired with the sports of the field, she, perhaps, would try to get his opinion of a book, a song, a drawing—this would lead them to her *boudoir*, a small square print-room over the porch, the casement of which was covered with jasmines and honeysuckles: here, too, stood her harp—that naturally would lead to her singing. And what all this, in the course of time, was likely to lead to, I believe I need tell nobody who is old enough to read my story.

And yet, Dr. Dalling, a man of clear perception, of extraordinary quickness, knowledge of the world, and insight into worldly motives, went on visiting his parishioners, writing his sermons, attending his vestries, regulating his business, and saw no more of what was doing or what would be the probable result of it, than if he had been as blind as Cupid himself; to say truth, the whole trio were in the dark as to the real position of

affairs: if Rose had been asked what she thought of Edward Bramley, she would without trepidation, blushing, faltering or stammering, have praised him to the very echo, have told you of his talent, of his generosity, his charity, his wit, his worth;—this does not look like love, which seeks to conceal the *real object*, and even prompts the girl to censure what she most approves. If I, who know her well enough to have put such a question, had asked her seriously if she loved Edward Bramley, as lovers love, she would have laughed at me for supposing such a thing possible; and with all the ardour of youth and all the enthusiasm of which *he* was possessed, I doubt whether Edward Bramley himself had a better notion of the actual state of his heart than Rose had of that of her's.

When one leaves a small town for a large one as a residence, although, perhaps, one is stricken with the magnificence of the new view, one does not feel the *increased* extent of prospect, the width of the streets, or the height of the houses, in their full force, till one goes back again to the objects which we first left,

and to which the eye had before become familiarised—it is on the return to the smaller and more confined domain that one feels the superiority of that which, when we first saw it, did not strike us as so much finer. With our young people at Emmerton the case was much the same—they were happy, contented, easy, and gay, without the possibility of any occurrence likely to excite any violent feeling; and it was only when they were *separated* that they really appreciated the value of each other's society: that which had before seemed gay, on the return to it from *her*, appeared flat, stale, and unprofitable—and Edward, after his mind had been soothed and elevated, softened and enlightened by that most charming of all charming women—only wondered how he could have enjoyed the diversions of *Alma Mater*, into which he had formerly entered with so much spirit.

Yet these days were not to last. Who in such a Paradise could dread a serpent?—but I must not anticipate.

I have before mentioned that the arrangement for Edward's residence with the Dalling

family was pressed, and even carried into effect by the strenuous exertions of Mr. Amos Ford. When my reader knows Mr. Amos Ford better, he will know that he never did a thing without a motive, and when I have said that Mr. Amos Ford was a methodist and an attorney, I trust I shall not have prejudiced my reader against him; he was universally respected and looked up to. He attended chapel regularly, and some say that in a conventicle built by himself he even went the whole length of preaching.

He had a daughter, Rachel Ford, who was a pattern to her sex: she was as demure as the hand-maidens of the most unsophisticated days; she was full of religion—her mind constantly fixed on things above; her countenance (though plain) was serious and contemplative—her manner cold—her conversation chaste, almost to prudishness; she dealt out maxims even upon the pinning of a cap, and would quote scriptural authority for tying up a geranium.

She was pale and thin, and sighs would steal from her lips as if unconsciously; rigidly regular in her devotions, and zealously furious against amusements, she rejected cards and

the jingling of music as abominations, and during the stay of the strolling actors in Emerton, her state was most pitiable.

Her father, by dint of what we will call industry in his profession, had accumulated much property : he had become, unexpectedly, yet fortunately, residuary legatee to several clients, whose wills he himself had prepared, and having had the affairs of His Excellency Edward Baron Belmont, G. C. B. for several years, during his Excellency's absence, in his hands, had acquired, pending his vicegerency over them, considerable influence with the tenantry and neighbours. This influence was much increased by his religious zeal during the residence of that rector whose qualities I have already attempted to describe, which shewed itself in alms, in charity, and in prayer, and which had collected to his *Free Chapel* nearly as many friends as visitors. And such was the impression in his favour, that if his praises were obtained through the power delegated to him by his noble client, they were re-echoed back to his Lordship with such frequency and strength, that all parties became perfectly satisfied, the tenants with the agent,

and the agent with the principal ; and at the period I first am compelled to introduce him, his carriage might be seen every day, Sundays excepted, at the doors of all the best houses in the vicinity of Emmerton ; nay, the humble landholders had dignified him with the appellation of Squire Ford, to which they (and perhaps correctly) imagined he had as much claim as to that of *Gentleman*, which in this country, custom and courtesy have affixed to the names of individuals of his calling.

But I perceive, that while I merely proposed to describe a place, I have fallen into the description of persons—so be it; my readers are now pretty well acquainted with some of my leading characters, and with a general view of the *locale*.

To complete the sketch, and bring it more home to them, I shall merely add, that besides the families with whom I and the reader are doomed to live, there were old maids who played quadrille, and young maids who danced quadrilles—small coteries of twaddlers who met at seven o'clock to drink hot water, mis-called tea, and play long whist for sixpences till ten, when *the* sedan-chair came for some,

maids with cloaks and lanterns for others, when they separated for the night, those only satisfied who succeeded in carrying off the value of two or three points, in addition to a glass of their hostess's well-kept currant wine.

The misses were divided into factions, and abused each other outrageously; while those who were dear friends would sit hand-in-hand on the sofa, talking sentiment during the time their mothers were playing cards. Beaux were particularly scarce: Captain Hogmore had grown stale; besides, what was he among so many? Mr. Blithe, jun. son of the apothecary, was one of the rising hopes of the circle: he was just nineteen, with a milk-white face, a bad neckcloth with a big bow in the front, and legs like sticks of black sealing-wax. Mr. Atkins, the usher at Mr. Birch's academy, was occasionally to be got; and two very "nice, genteel young men," who were articled to Mr. Watkins (Ford's rival), were always "asked out" with the family; but then there were *two* Misses Watkins, in copper-coloured pelisses and coquelicot bonnets, who seemed to consider the clerks their private property; a thing which when mentioned to Mrs. W. the

Mamma, excited her anger, and a declaration that "it was all nonsense."

In the better circles, the only novelty I have at the moment to offer, is the family at the time resident at Burrowdale Park.

Mr. Humbug, or, as he was commonly called, Jack, was a person who sprang from the soil, and *was, what*, nobody can exactly say. He had been in his youth a bit of a lawyer, a bit of a sailor, a bit of a soldier; he was a dabbler in all arts and sciences, a proficient in none. He could draw, he could sing, he could dance, play, etch, engrave, model, write sonnets, take likenesses, fish, shoot, hunt, turn little ivory boxes, make alum baskets, carve and gild, and play every game on the cards: he had an eye for a horse, drove four-in-hand better than Buxton, jumped higher than any man in the United Kingdom, tired Barclay in a walk, and beat Bedford at billiards—at least, he said he did.

I remember one day seeing at Fontainebleau a clock with seven or eight dials, one professing to tell the hour, another the day, a third the month, a fourth the moon's age, a fifth the year, and so on; and they were all *very nearly*

correct, but not one of them quite. I could not, at the moment, help thinking of my friend Humbug: if half the pains which had been taken with this toy, had been bestowed upon so much of the machinery as was merely necessary to the *well-going* of any one of those dials, an object would have been attained, and we should have had the advantage of deriving correct information from it as far as it went; but the application of labour being diversified, and so many qualities sought, the consequence was, both to the man and the machine, that they professed to do every thing, and succeeded in doing nothing perfectly.

It was truly the case with Jack Humbug: his knacks and tricks, and turnings, and manœuvrings, and talents if you will, were so incongruous, so sketchy, so oddly assorted, and so ill-arranged, that they were to his mind much the same as the motley coat is to Harlequin's body—a collection of patches of excellent materials, whimsically stitched together, to make their wearer as ridiculous as possible.

Jack had the advantage of a remarkably good person, and that, with the aid of his nicknackeries, perfect good humour, and a smat-

tering of boudoir wit, procured him the affections of Lady Honoria Dawdle, the only daughter and heiress of a noble earl now no more: she was beautiful and a fool,—she thought him beautiful and a conjuror, and eloped with her young swain before she was of age.

Her friends, perceiving that the step was taken, instead of crying out and exclaiming against the affair, very prudently consoled themselves with the reflection that she “*might have done worse*,” and determined rather than affect to dislike a marriage which they could not dissolve, to do every thing in their power which might add to the consequence and respectability of the person to whom she was united, and give him, if possible, an importance worthy of one of themselves, which he then was, and which he had not. Thus, in his matrimonial project, he may be thought to have succeeded entirely, but not so, for although, when his dear Honoria came of age, he found himself possessed of a life-interest in about twenty thousand pounds per annum, still there was an earldom in remainder, which was encumbered with two conditions.

First, that the nephew of Lady Honoria

should die without issue—and secondly, that *he*, Humbug, should *have* a son upon whom the honour might devolve. Here he failed: he had been blessed with three daughters, but no male heir had gratified his expectations or his vanity.

Lady Honoria was an excessively weak woman, and, as is usually the case, an excessively vain one; she was without exception the most sentimental creature that ever existed, and, like Fielding's Huncamunca, shuddered at a gross idea. She *had been* a beauty, and the worst of the matter was, that she could never forget it—and neither published caricatures, nor consequent rheumatism, could induce her at fifty-five to heighten her tucker, curtail her ringlets, or lengthen her petticoats; and the garb in which her mind was arrayed was coeval with that, in which she clothed her person.

Love, romantic love, that particular sort of love which lives in a cottage, and breakfasts upon a May-morning breeze, was the usual theme of her conversation—she was full of romantic enthusiasm about moonlight, and perfect abhorrence of worldly views. Her favou-

rites were “all heart,” and “all mind,” and (like some others of my friends noticed elsewhere) “all soul.” She wrote verses, and would read poetry with a twanging affectation to her friends, and emphasize the beauties; she would melt into tears at a piece of music she remembered to have heard played by a friend who had been dead thirty-four years; she treasured a rosebud in a box which somebody had told her grew in the garden of the house where Petrarch was said once to have lived—and she had an album, and scrap-books, and, moreover, and above all, was extremely fond of flirting—being, by the way, considered, by those who knew her best, somewhat jealous of her daughters in that line.

The girls were all exceedingly foolish, but none of them in their mother’s way: they had not a grain of sentiment in their composition—they had, according to the character which their Mamma gave them, no hearts; they had fifty thousand pounds a-piece, and they knew it—and with all their flightiness and absurdity they had sense enough (that is, the sense of self-preservation) not to propose to themselves to bestow their fortunes upon gentlemen who

are accustomed to sit with crooks in their hands or flageolets in their mouths

“Sub tegmine fagi,”

till the sun, sinking in the west, gilds the horizon with its mellowed tints, and bids them fold their fleecy flocks. They had no notion of Arcadian pleasures ; an excellent well-built, well-furnished house, a well-appointed establishment, smart carriages, and good horses, appeared to them more likely to produce comfort and satisfaction than the romantic joys of fields and folds, and flowers and bowers, of which their mother talked, as if every month were May. The girls knew and saw, that tune-ful groves and verdant meads are extremely disagreeable in the winter, and that an old shepherdess is by no means an engaging personage. Lady Honoria was shocked at all this, and used to write about, to the friends of her youth, to complain of the insensibility of her children, who would not elevate their minds above the grovelling things of everyday existence.

Jack Humbug, himself, was a kind indulgent father, and a fond-enough husband, considering it was a love-marriage—for, dreadful

as the truth is, and scolded as I shall be by the Humbugs for saying so, I have never seen a run-away match turn out well; and I have noted down a good many in my commonplace book.

Humbug's disposition greatly resembled his wife's in one respect: he affected never to feel the approach of age, he kept on jumping as he had done while he was a stripling, after he had attained the age of fifty-six, and when a leap over a dwarf ottoman with a run of the rug's length was a feat in which he was baffled nine times out of ten; he never could be persuaded to save his money, or his constitution, but betted with the most hardened bravery that he would take fences and clear gates, over which, no possible effort of his could carry or even scramble him, always giving some excellent reason for his failure "*that time*," though most assuredly not the right one.

He wore his clothes in the extreme of the reigning fashion, whatever it might be, or however ill-suited to his figure; a wig *à-la-naturelle*, nearly the colour of his whiskers, but not quite—a waist intended for a slim figure,

and a hat meant for a boy: his manners, too, were extremely juvenile; he was always alive, always got the first of every thing; the first fizgig from Germany was in his possession—nobody ever did Cardinal Puff before *him*; in short, by his own account, he was perfectly wise, perfectly learned, perfectly clever, perfectly fashionable, perfectly happy, and perfectly young at fifty-six; but every body who knew Jack, and heard his stories, knew perfectly well what Humbug really was.

The girls were quite charming in their way: Miss Humbug, the eldest, was full of excessive pride: she knew her station—her pretensions were considerable; but her blood and her fortune authorized the tone she assumed. She had fallen in love with her dancing-master's apprentice when she was seventeen, and, much too prudent to risk her property by marrying him when she came of age, or her propriety by any other less worldly step, conquered her passion, and declared that the idea of an attachment to an inferior was not only incompatible with the regulations of female society, but beneath the dignity of human nature.

Fanny, a beautiful creature, though not sentimental, (for, as I have before said, they none of them were) was outrageous as to the force of moral obligations. She turned away two maids in one month—the first for having told her a falsehood, and the second for having appropriated to her own use half a yard of lace, which was not actually given to her by her young lady. Fanny, about the same period, was requested by one of Gray's shopmen to look into her muff, and see whether she had not, by mistake, taken up a turquoise necklace and ear-rings which were lying on the counter. She did so; and infinitely to *her* surprise (though not to that of the man), the necklace and ear-rings were found where he had been so extremely rude as to imagine they might possibly be.

Charlotte, the youngest, was quite of a different turn. She was blue, deep blue; you could taste the Prussic acid even in her conversation; it was full of killing pedantry and pitiable affectation; she was as silly as her sisters, but, having bored herself to death to learn Latin and Greek, felt herself authorized to surfeit her friends with the half-ripe fruits

of her labours. She had many fluttering beaux hovering about her fifty thousand pounds, but the airs of the *sçavante* drove them away, one after another; so that whatever desire the young linguist might have had to conjugate, the world seems to think she never had an opportunity of declining.

In short, from the oldest to the youngest, from the father down to Charlotte, they were all decided HUMBUGS; and having said thus much by way of preparation, I shall leave them to fight their own way with my reader.

The Humbugs were "quite delighted" with the Dallings; and poor Rose, who was no match for them in the world, felt convinced that they were the most sincere and excellent people upon earth. They went regularly to church, and so did all their servants, carrying great Prayer-books and huge Bibles; and they as regularly told Rose once in every week, during their residence at Burrowdale, that her father was a finer preacher than Andrews or Gardiner; that as to Sydney Smith, he was a mere dunce to him; and that his sermons equalled only in the excellence of their matter, the superiority of the manner in which they

were delivered ; and poor Rose believed it, little thinking that all the praises, which were meant to prepossess her in their favour, and all the invitations to Burrowdale Park, while Edward Bramley was away, were intended as so many steps towards getting this said Mr. Edward Bramley there perpetually, when he should return to Emmerton.

Dalling himself saw through the halo of affectation in which the whole family was enveloped, and laughed at their praises, which he in an instant perceived must have an object. Yet, as he was not himself conscious of the power which his child, evidently to all other eyes, had over the heir of Belmont, it never occurred to *him*, that, that was the point to which their efforts were directed.

To Dalling it was a matter of perfect indifference ; he by no means disliked Jack Humbug—he was a man who had no earthly failing, except that, which seemed to property his whole character, and his conversation was superabundantly replete with fun and whim.—He told the most extravagant falsehoods with the most perfect gravity ; and having adopted the mode, very much in fashion, of *personi-*

*fy*ing jokes (that is to say, making himself the hero of stories which Joe Miller recorded at least a century ago), he repeated stale jests and ancient anecdotes in his own version so perpetually, that at last he really believed himself to have been the identical man who, having been reproached with a short coat, said it would be long enough before he got another; and had no doubt whatever in his own mind but that *he* himself had heard the girl at the lodging-house say she was to be *let alone*.

This, though a weakness, was certainly no vice, and Dalling rather enjoyed the society of Burrowdale as a recreation, for Lady Honoria, with all her folly, contrived to subdue her affectation before the Doctor, and the girls and their father, to do them justice, were all extremely good-natured.

Edward had just returned from Oxford, and had fallen into the old routine of the enjoyments of Emmerton, when the Humbugs began their projected attack, and an invitation to Burrowdale for the Dallings accompanied one to him, and, as in the limited circle of their little town it would have been difficult to have found an available reason for declining it,

the bidding was necessarily accepted, and Rose Dalling unconsciously felt vexed and annoyed that it was. *She* certainly did not know why, though I and my readers might perhaps have guessed had we been there.

When the day arrived, the scanty forces of the neighbourhood were mustered, and the Fords, in compliment to Edward, were invited to meet him; while Captain Hogmore was requested to take his *annual* dinner (for of such value was the Captain reckoned in the recruiting service, that he had been left stationary at Emmerton for two years) at the Hall.

The Humbugs insisted upon sending their carriage for the Dallings, and the offer was much too convenient to be rejected; the Fords had tendered their's, but the Humbugs made a point and succeeded in carrying it, and at half-past six our little party ascended the snowy steps of Burrowdale Hall, and were ushered into the blue drawing-room, where hung the portrait of Edward's mother, his two uncles, and the lamented sister, whose ill-fated marriage we have before noticed.

Edward felt a repugnance, which he labour-

ed to conceal, at the natural “*at homeishness*” of another family in his father’s house; and when he saw the easy carelessness with which they treated pieces of furniture which he, as a child, had been taught to think magnificent and even sacred, he devoutly wished the day were over.

Every body knows what an uncomfortable half-hour that is, in England, which precedes dinner, the ladies ranged in a semi-circle, all looking so fresh and so nice and so cold, talking *sotto voce* either of the weather, or the last “very dreadful accident” which has been put forth in the newspapers—the men grouped in various parts of the room, eyeing each other as if to ascertain the *calibre* of each other’s intellect by the quality of a coat or the tying-on of a neckcloth, or rather as if wishing to prove how extremely insolent they *could be* to each other, should the exigency of the case require it.

If this be tormenting in winter, when the fire-side breaks a little of the formality, and the moderated light mellows the tints, softens the expression of countenances, and renders personal imperfections or *mauvaise*

honte less conspicuous, what is it when a great blazing July sun glares in at the windows, broiling one with heat, exposing every defect, and making one's very shoes look brown, and when one is removed (without being relieved) from the drawing-room to the dinner-parlour, and placed at table with the same great staring sun directly opposite to one's face, between a woman whom one does not know, and a man whom one does not wish to know?

All this happened to Edward: he led Miss Humbug to table, and in consequence of some manœuvring and mis-arrangement divided her from Captain Hogmore, his distaste for whom had always tacitly avowed itself by marked shyness, and whose natural dislike for Edward had been considerably increased from the circumstance of his having been twice prosecuted as a trespasser and poacher upon Burrowdale preserves, which, although Edward was not even aware of the circumstance, the gallant officer attributed entirely to him.

Rose Dalling was most inconveniently placed at table as regards our hero, for, *not unintentionally*, she was seated on the right

of Humbug, who had Miss Ford on his left. Edward should have sat next Lady Honoria, but, in a struggle to get near Rose, he lost the place intended for him, which Dr. Dalling took, and got, as I before observed, next to the Captain; this disconcerted him, nor did the hoydenish airs of the Misses Humbug, the exuberant nonsense of their mother, nor the prudishness of Rachel Ford, even by their variety, recompense him for the loss of the pure, natural being with whom he was accustomed to associate.

Dinners, balls, concerts, parties of every sort, are so much alike, that it would be but waste of time to describe the splendid plateau, the massive dishes, or the choice viands which reposed upon them—the chilling hock, the sparkling champagne, which set the eyes beaming and the cheeks glowing—or the conversation which intervened between the moments of eating and drinking. Lady Honoria, awed by the presence of Dalling, was less flighty than usual; Ford, by dint of an excess of two glasses of wine, warmed into something like mirth; but Rachel remained unmoved and immoveable by passing circumstances:

the three Misses sported all their attractions to ensnare our hero, who perhaps never appeared to less advantage in his life.

Music was the order of the evening—much, as it should seem, to the horror of Miss Ford, who was sensitively alive to the indecorum, first, of the melting tones of amatory songs, and, secondly, of the improper exhibition of person, in which she considered Lady Honoria to indulge when she opened the little concert by playing on the harp—her performance was meant to be of the first order, she was quite a pedestal woman in music, but she could only play upon her own harp, which had a double action, (I believe they call it) whereas it was notorious to every body who knew her Ladyship's age, that when she learned to play, there was no such thing as this double-actioned harp in existence.

The girls performed duetts; subsequently the family sang glees—Humbug took a part—even the gentle Rose joined, and time, which had lagged so heavily during dinner, wore away faster than Edward had even hoped.

What his feelings were at quitting Burrowdale I am unable to say, but certain it is, that

if the girls of the family had displayed their various attractions before him in hopes of catching a heart, they were woefully mistaken. The golden pippin of our modern Paris was not destined for any one of the goddesses of Burrowdale.

It was not to be supposed, however, that in such a pursuit, such a family would be easily tired; they were indefatigable in their assiduities: wherever Edward moved, there were the three Miss Humbugs—it seemed a matter of indifference upon whose brows the baronial coronet (which, like Macbeth's dagger, they perpetually “saw before their eyes”) settled, and, to say truth, there seemed no small difficulty in escaping the treble-barrelled artillery which was thus played off upon him.

Every body who knows the world must have observed that, failing in attempts of their own, a certain class of girls adopt the *amiable* system of foiling others in similar pursuits, as *Gay* says,

“Pleased to ruin
Others wooing,
Never happy in their own.”

And certain it was, that by looks and laughter,

and even by the sidelong raillery of the Burrowdale girls, Rose Dalling began to understand the *real* state of her heart with respect to Bramley, and to apprehend, moreover, that she had betrayed it.

It is impossible to describe what she felt when she began to question herself upon the subject. She trembled—her cheeks flushed, though she was alone; she considered—reconsidered; all was in vain—her peace of mind was gone: it was too clear that what she had fancied friendship, was, in truth, love: to have admitted such a sentiment into her breast, while *he*, upon whom her virgin affections were thus unconsciously fixed, had never spoken in the language of passion—the thought that she loved, with a love, perhaps, unrequited, a man in a sphere of life above herself, whose father was distinguished by his haughtiness and ambition, whose career had been marked out by that father to lie amidst the highest and busiest scenes of life—what had she done? She felt herself guilty, and a flood of tears alone relieved her for the moment.

Her situation was pitiable: to whom was she to turn for succour or advice? She had no

mother. She saw the impropriety of remaining an hour longer on the same terms, or even under the same roof with Edward. Could she consult her father? No; she felt the disclosure of her attachment would kill her. Could she propose to leave him, and visit her aunt in Leicestershire? How could she deprive a doting parent of his greatest solace? Could she suggest the removal of Bramley? No; why should she? His residence at the parsonage made her father happy—they were pleased with each other's society.—What was to be done? The sneers of the ladies at the Park, and, more than those, the stings of her own conscience, were too formidable to be encountered. She thought of speaking on the subject to the pious, exemplary Ford; but still her heart recoiled from the idea of a confidant, and, in the midst of her contending thoughts, a summons to dinner ended the first, and, as it turned out, the last deliberation with herself upon the subject.

Never did girl suffer more than my poor Rose during the once cheerful meal. She shrank from the proffered hand of Bramley, as if she felt it would have been guilty to take

it; and while her head was averted from him, her eyes, scarcely uplifted, encountered her father's, who saw the change in the expression of her countenance, but attributed it to cold or heat, or fatigue or reading, or, Heaven knows what else.

Edward's glance, however, was keener; he saw what neither fatigue nor cold, nor any bodily ill could have brought about: he saw the abstracted look, the anxious movement of her eye, which seemed to fear to rest upon any particular object. Her hurried manner, her close attention to her father, her studied coldness towards himself—these were symptoms of something more than mere “corporeal sufferance,” but still not less enigmatical to Edward upon that account.

During dinner he puzzled himself by endeavouring to recollect what he could possibly have done to deserve the alteration which he perceived in her manner towards him, but in vain—there was neither a word nor an action with which he could reproach himself; but he found himself more disturbed and agitated by the changed appearance of things, than he was, perhaps, prepared to expect that he should have

been. The cheerful conversation of the once happy little party was exchanged for a restless silence, a nervous feeling, which seeks change by way of relief, and which partakes of sorrow and apprehension, but in which no pleasure mingles.

When Rose left the table, Edward almost expected a remark upon what had occurred from Dalling; but not the slightest observation did he make upon the events of the day. He confined himself to a somewhat diffuse consideration of the leading article of the preceding night's Courier, which had just before dinner reached him, upon which he might have spared himself the exertion of speaking, inasmuch as his auditor was completely absorbed in meditations of his own, and was conscious of no part of the Doctor's harangue, except its termination: he was then greatly relieved by the cessation of a monotonous noise which had for some quarter of an hour wounded his ears, but penetrated no farther, and felt gratified at the silence of the man before whose opinions at other times he bowed with respect, and to whose words at a different period he would have listened with admiration.

When Edward found himself in his own chamber, all that had passed at dinner rushed into his mind: he threw himself upon his bed—hid his face in his pillow—recalled Rose as she had been but yesterday—compared the blooming, laughing, artless girl, as she then was, with the cold, chilling, reserved creature of the present hour: again he revolved in his mind all he had said or done which could possibly have offended her—he discovered it not; but he discovered, during this examination of himself, the vital importance of her good opinion to him; he discovered that he was the mere creature of *her* will—that his happiness depended upon *her* smile—that he could endure no change in her manner—that she was the breath of his life—the very soul of his existence.

Think what their meeting must have been, when coffee was announced in the drawing-room: the vast—the important—the *deciding* discovery which Nature herself had made to both these young, affectionate creatures in one short day—her dread of evincing her feelings; his fear of not meeting with a requital of his love—her apprehension of committing her-

self; his horror of being rejected! It must be clear to my readers that matters could not rest long at this point; but what will they say, when they are told that to complete the embarrassment, the servant mentioned that the Doctor had walked down to Emmerton to visit a sick parishioner, and would not return for an hour!

Oh, that hour! What sixty minutes of these young ones' lives had ever been so fraught with interest as these? Who could attempt to describe the scene which passed? Not I. It had better, therefore, be imagined; besides, it was a *tête-à-tête*, and if one knew any thing about it, it would be a breach of confidence to repeat it. In less than half the period assigned to Dalling's absence, the world and worldly views had faded from the tear-fraught eyes of the devoted pair, and *she* that had trembled at the thought of love a little hour before, met the disclosure which Edward made of the state of his heart, with the candour and sincerity she felt due to such a declaration. Their fate was decided—for the first time, her cheek, glowing with blushes, sank upon his shoulder, and the irrevocable treaty was sealed with the first kiss of love upon her ruby lips.

Those who have tasted such feelings will appreciate the heavenly calm of pleasure which followed this reciprocal, this honest, virtuous burst of passion — all care, all sorrow, all anxiety, seemed at an end; and—oh! to love and be beloved as these loved,—it is a joy to be felt but once in our existence!

One trifling circumstance had escaped the memory of the fond pair—which was this:—that either of them had a father—and that the pride of *his* Sire, which might be startled at such an union, was less formidable, in fact, than that of Dalling, who would rather have died than seemed to connive at the event, with a disposition to do which, when he became acquainted with the circumstances, he would be fully aware he should be charged, by the connexions of his enthusiastic inmate.

It was all too late to reason now; the question was how to *act*. Rose was for immediate disclosure of circumstances to her father; but Edward felt that he had difficulties beyond her knowledge to encounter: he suggested a short delay, and urged his wish as strongly as he could without evincing perhaps too pointedly an apprehension of *his* father's disappro-

bation. It is most probable that, under the circumstances, and with the confidence she had in the superiority of his intellect, he would have carried his point, but, as events seldom come singly, the discussion was checked by the arrival of a letter from Mr. Ford, directed to Edward, and inclosing the following epistle from his noble Sire, which I give verbatim as a specimen of *that* style to which I have before alluded, and in which his Lordship invariably indulged.

Edward, with a foreboding feeling, broke open the seal, and read—

“ *Most confidential.*

“ MY DEAR SON, ———July — 18—

“ Your note of the 28th ult. was handed to me through Ford the day before yesterday, and, anxious as I am to answer such points of it as bear upon your present situation and prospects, I lose no time in despatching this.

“ With respect to the duration of my stay here, or the probable date of my return, desirous as I may, and naturally must be, to afford you every information on the subject, I do not feel myself authorized to give a specific reply; indeed, I consider it incompatible with the in-

terests of those with whom I have the honour to act, to commit them, as to any pledge which may have been given in this matter. I feel confident that there exists a favourable disposition towards me in certain quarters, and although I could not take the responsibility of hazarding an opinion upon the result of any application which I might possibly be induced to make, still I am free to admit the impression upon my mind to be, that unless some peculiar objection might subsequently arise, there would be no difficulty opposed to any ulterior proposition of mine.

“ You will thus perceive, that although I have as explicitly as possible laid before you my present views, I cannot concede the point which you have somewhat strongly, though unintentionally so, pressed upon me ;—however, with respect to your own pursuits I can be more unreserved, and shall trust to your own sense and right feeling to receive my advice, as I proffer it, in good part.

“ Of the two measures proposed, that of your remaining at Oxford, which you seem strongly to advocate, or of coming to me here, which Ford supports, open as I am to the various ad-

vantages and disadvantages of the case, and anxious to give them every consideration, I am free to admit that I am prepared to suggest the necessity of farther deliberation—and I can have no difficulty in explaining myself upon this head. Certain motives exist which might induce a desire for alteration in either plan were it now definitively fixed upon ; but, urgent as those motives would inevitably be, I feel a delicacy in developing the precise nature of them in their present stage.

“ It has always been my wish, and I trust you will believe that I have no desire to appropriate an undue measure of praise to myself, to meet your views whenever a negotiation founded upon a rational basis has been opened ; and I feel that I am not pressing myself too much upon your attention when I throw out an implied expectation, that in matters deeply important to the general character and condition of the family, you will meet any overtures of mine with a favourable disposition. I wish by no means to extort any thing like a pledge ; nor indeed have the measures, to which I have just casually alluded, assumed a shape sufficiently matured to require your early attention ;

I mean merely to express a wish generally, that no decision on your part should be made which might militate against the arrangements I have thrown together in my mind, and which may probably be submitted to you in another form hereafter.

“Ford has my directions to honour your drafts to the amount agreed upon in my letter under date, January 15, 18—; and it is my particular wish, however much averse I may feel from any unnecessary financial expenditure, that you should maintain with the most scrupulous attention the appearance suited to your rank and station. I would also throw out for your consideration, whether a short residence in London in each year amongst your own connexions would not conduce to the ulterior objects I have in view for you, and which, although (as I have just remarked) I am not at the present moment prepared to submit them in any tangible shape, I may perhaps go so far as to say are such as in my judgment cannot reasonably but meet with a concurrence on your part.

“I refer you to Ford for any farther news of me, and I beg my compliments to Dr. Dalling,

although I have not the advantage of a personal acquaintance with him. Upon this latter part of my letter you may, however, use your discretion ; but at all events, believe me, my dear Son,

“Your affectionate Father,

“BELMONT.”

From this very explicit and *satisfactory* communication Edward, in his present mood and under existing circumstances, drew the most unpleasant inferences—it was, as he, and everybody else who knew Lord Belmont, knew, perfectly impossible to come at any thing like a fact either in conversation or correspondence with him ; but the gentle hints “thrown out” about “ulterior objects” and measures which were to be met with favourable consideration, could tend but to *one* point, and that point neither more nor less than marriage.

Thus, at least, our sensitive hero reasoned. “The thief sees an officer in every bush,” and the ardent, confessed, committed, pledged, *lover* saw in his father’s letter ominous portendings of a matrimonial alliance in some other quarter. He could ill conceal his apprehensions from Rose, and still worse, his

anxiety that she should not *immediately* disclose the events of that memorable evening to her father.

Rose, who was all nature, and had no notion of concealment or manœuvring, did not receive his entreaties for the present observance of silence upon the subject, quite so cordially or readily as he wished ; not that she doubted—not that she had a suspicion of Edward—poor soul ! she knew too little of the world. He had confessed an affection for her of the tenderest nature, in the tenderest manner ; she had received his professions with primeval simplicity, and the idea that he could *alter* his opinion or change his mind, was one which never entered into her imagination.

The letter from his Lordship, however, staggered his son. An hour before he had seen nothing but loves and doves, and bowers and flowers, and all those sweet scenes and images which have their existence in youthful fancy ; he now beheld his angry father shutting his heart and his house against him and his hapless helpless wife. He felt that he had been rash—that he had almost sinned against a parent by the precipitancy of his measures ; a

momentary dread seized him, but he looked at Rose, and all his terror vanished. Love, undaunted, omnipotent love, resumed his throne, and his father's candid *exposé* was committed to his coat-pocket.

Still, however, he made it a point that Rose should not immediately reveal to the good Doctor what had happened ;—need I add, that he persuaded her to acquiesce ? I think not ; and yet I have no doubt that many young ladies who have been differently educated, will think my poor Rose's conduct extremely wrong and highly indelicate in this affair ; but I can tell them that it was no such thing : she had a perfect confidence in the man she had chosen, and *he* wished to delay the *denouement* of their attachment, for reasons, of which, confiding in him as she did, she did not allow herself to doubt the justice. I am not, however, arguing the case upon a point of propriety ; I am relating facts. She submitted to his wish upon the occasion, and when Dr. Dalling took his accustomed glass of soda-water, before he lighted his candle in order to depart for bed, he had as much notion of what had occurred in his absence, as had His Excellency the Right Hon.

Baron Belmont, G. C. B. St. A. and St. P. Ambassador and Plenipotentiary Extraordinary at the Court of ———.

There are men in the world, who consider women as sportsmen consider hares, and think that all the pleasure lies in the chase. What now, if, after all the pretensions of Edward Bramley, *he* should be one of those—if, conscious of his triumph and secure in his conquest, he now felt that he had, in the ardour of the pursuit, gone quite far enough to gratify an unjustifiable vanity, and yet not too far to retract? What would the ladies who have begun, perhaps, to be pleased with him, say then? I know not; nor can I venture here to develope the plans which he had formed, nor lay before my readers the reasons he had for wishing to delay his declaration to Dalling. I must assume the cant of his Right Honourable and exemplary father upon the occasion, and, however ready I may be to admit the propriety, generally speaking, of such an explanation, distinctly state, that matters have not arrived at sufficient maturity to justify me in submitting the precise nature of Bramley's intentions, or the probable results of

his conduct, to the country at large at the present moment.

Early on the morning subsequent to *the* day in which the mutual disclosure of feeling was made, Edward was closetted with Ford—the amiable, pious Ford; and received from that exemplary man the most striking proofs of his real and devoted attachment to *him*, to his interests, and to his family.

His manner to Edward was, as usual, all mildness and suavity; and so effectually did these qualities work upon our hero, that, unconsciously almost, he confided the whole secret of his heart to his father's *homme d'affaires*.

Much to Edward's surprise, Ford exhibited neither astonishment nor expressed a disapproval; on the contrary, he eulogized Rose Dalling, declared she had always been a favourite of his daughter's, and that although the extremely high tone, and, as he considered, lax morality of the Doctor's principles, had prevented, in a great measure, a more active cultivation of an acquaintance between the families, still, admitting himself to be *particular* in his feelings on such subjects, he had no doubt that Rose would make him an excel-

lent help-meet, and ensure him all the comforts of domestic life.

“All my apprehensions rest upon my father,” said Edward. “I know his character, his ambition, his desire for my advancement; and I feared, from the tenor of his letter, that even now he had entered into some matrimonial convention in my name.”

“I think not,” said Ford; “by the favouring blessing of Providence, we may hope to hear from him again next week; or might it not be advisable, *ad interim*, to communicate with him? The view I take of his last letters to me certainly induces me to believe that he is extremely anxious about you at this particular crisis; but if I know his heart, I may venture to say, that were your happiness in one scale, and his political views in the other, he would freely give up all the latter to ensure the former.”

“I had heard,” said Edward, “that there was a Lady Louisa Vivian, a daughter of the Duke of Basingstoke, who ——”

“Oh!” interrupted Ford; “you *have* heard of that affair—that, I think, need not much annoy you; there was something like a com-

pact, I really believe, between Lord Belmont and the Duke, with respect to an intermarriage in the families; yet it related *not* to Lady Louisa, but to Lady Maria, whom it has pleased the Disposer of all good to call from this troublesome world to a better."

"You are sure of *that*, my dear Ford?" eagerly enquired Edward.

"Quite sure; I believe I could shew you the correspondence between your father and myself at the time, so on that score you may make yourself easy; and I pray to the Lord so to bless you in this serious undertaking, that you may live honourably and happily in the holy state of matrimony, and raise up to your worldly goods a long and noble posterity."

"But," said our hero, "I have not yet obtained the consent of one very important personage."

"Excuse me," replied Ford, "*the* important personage has, by your own shewing, given her consent; and although blessed myself with a child, who has no will but her father's, and whose eyes are set upon things not of this world, yet, in nine cases out of ten, when once the lady has yielded her heart, the more

obstacles thrown in the way, the more strongly she adheres to her purpose—the more the disposition is thwarted, the more the vapour is condensed—and the infallible mode to produce an elopement is to put a young woman under restraint. Believe me, with all Miss Dalling's excellencies, with all her charity and benevolence (for however blindly they may be misdirected, they still are excellencies), with all these she has sufficient worldliness in her character not to be diverted from her present purpose by any new difficulties."

"I think," said Edward, "that you have formed an erroneous estimate of Miss Dalling's qualities, and I am quite assured that if, as I think it extremely probable he will, her father should refuse his consent ——"

"Why should he, my dear Mr. Bramley? What hopes could he have ever entertained of making so advantageous a match for his child?"

"Making a match!" cried Edward, "Ford, he has no such idea—no such wish; and I very much doubt whether he will consent to part with the prop of his declining years."

"Oh! come," interrupted the attorney, "let

us not be so uncharitable as to attribute selfishness to the Rev. Doctor; worldliness is a part of what is called the established religion of the country. The career of a high-church parson is a race after preferment, accompanied by a thirst for gain, with which the purer and more liberal sects are wholly unacquainted. Had my daughter Rachel been honoured by your affections, much as I feel her value, for she is exemplary in every point, I should assuredly have waved all personal considerations, and sacrificed my own comforts and domestic advantages to her happiness, and that of her intended husband; why then should I be so unbelieving in the readiness of another, to make a similar effort?"

"Nay, but my dear Ford, where we differ is, upon that part of your supposition which would impute a design or connivance in the Doctor."

"Stay, my dear young friend, I never did intend to impute any such thing to your Rose's father. I felt, and spoke my feelings, that if *I* were the fortunate man whose daughter had been honoured by your affection, I should—I could have desired nothing more for

her in this world; and it does not appear to me, provided she had approved of you, that there could have been a possibility of my non-acquiescence."

"Still harping upon my daughter."

What can he mean by this reiteration of *his* views, and *his* wishes, and *his* Rachel? thought Edward. It struck him, as indeed was the truth, that all Ford's hopes *had* once centered in that sole object; and little fearing, because he did not know of her existence, a rival so formidable to his child as Rose Dalling, it was *he* who had earnestly pressed the stay of Edward at the Parsonage, whence he anticipated that frequent visits would be made to his house, and where his residence might continue without exciting any apprehension in Lord Belmont's mind of a too great intimacy between his son and his man of business.

Ford had been foiled in this expectation; and if the intelligence given him by Edward mortified his pride, it exasperated Rachel's vanity; for with all her devout pretensions to sanctity, with all that unearthly serenity which beamed in her well-stored mind, she had

enough of humanity in her composition to feel a thousand sensations, which I cannot pretend to define, when she understood that Rose Dalling was the bride elect of the heir of Belmont.

Nothing is more humiliating, more vexatious than the consciousness of deception exposed, or, rather, the failure of schemes which have cost infinite pains and labour to carry on, and which, if one had known the truth at first, one must have known never could be effectual. Now it was that Rachel lamented the hours she had spent in sick women's cottages, leaving her servant-boy at their doors with a basket to catch Edward's eye as he passed through the outskirts of the town; now did she bitterly repent the often-taken long walk to Burgess's farm on the top of the hill to visit an old woman with the rheumatism, merely to be seen pacing the steep ascent through its long sinuosity from the windows of the Parsonage; great were her lamentations, indeed, for all the trouble she had incurred to make herself estimable in eyes which, as it now appeared, had never looked on her; and that beautiful temper of which her father was so justly proud, and

which, according to his account, had been soothed into perfect placidity by the calming aid of pure religion, burst forth in execrations—piously clothed, it is true—against the idle vanities of the world, the flesh, and—we believe she said—the Devil,—against that weakness which could prefer a tolerably pretty face to a devout heart, and choose a worldly girl in preference to one whose contempt for worldly objects had ever been made manifest.

Ford's situation was also uncomfortable, for such did he believe, and truly, to be his power over Lord Belmont, that he had made no doubt of carrying his point in one way or another, and in order to keep his favourite prospect open, had only the day before, written to dissuade his Lordship from making any definitive arrangement with his friend the Duke of Basingstoke, touching the marriage of his daughter Lady Louisa with his son; for perhaps my reader is not aware that although Ford told the truth, as to the death of Lady Maria, who had been originally intended for Edward, he had not told the *whole truth*, which was, that Lady Louisa, the second daughter, upon the decease of her elder sister, was generally con-

sidered by the parents to stand in a similar situation. The alliance was altogether proposed on the score of interest and influence, and it mattered no more to the elders of the party, by whom the arrangement was brought about, than it would in a bargain on the Stock Exchange, who had been their brokers.

Ford began to think he had over-reached himself when he sat down to reflect upon the events of the morning; he had written a pious exhortation to his noble client against worldly advantages, spoke of pure affection, virtue, and religion; and, in short, had assumed the tone of exhortation against forcing on, what he went so far as to call, an *unsanctified* union between Edward and Lady Louisa—meaning, as perhaps my reader may perceive, eventually to claim Edward's gratitude for the evitiation of a match with an ugly, haughty, overbearing and bad-tempered woman, thus entangling him in a net from which he did not mean that he should extricate himself singly.

All this Ford had planned in the reliance he had upon his influence over the noble Lord—an influence obtained by means to which I shall not at present allude, but which he certainly

possessed in an eminent degree. The struggle was a fearful one, in which any thing was to be set up in opposition to the pride of his Lordship; but Ford used to say to Rachel, that he knew his man, and thanked the Lord that he had made him an humble instrument to save a falling sinner.

Rachel never had been so vexed in her life as at the decided loss of this title: the rank would have enabled her to do so much good; the conservatory at Burrowdale would have made such an excellent chapel, and the forcing-house might have been so easily converted into a school for the neighbouring poor; and as correction is salutary, she felt that if she could but have obtained sufficient authority to introduce the tread-mill into the county gaol, which was very much indebted to her exertions, even as it was, for the distribution of tracts and hymns, her task of amelioration, or, as it is called, "bettering the condition of the poor," would have been nearly complete. Under the present circumstances she was disheartened and broken in spirit, but, with a confidence peculiar to the Fords, she attended chapel three times the following

day, and sat down to dinner with her father, as mild, as cold, as pale, and as placid as ever.

More active were the measures taken at the Parsonage. Rose felt bewildered as the hours wore on, and the events of the preceding evening yet remained undisclosed to Dalling; she felt that she could not allow it to remain a secret from him any longer, and yet her dread of disclosing it, kept her from hour to hour silent, and in a state of the most fearful agitation. She was pale—nervous—tears stood in her eye—she trembled as she thought of what had passed, and “pure as the icicle which hangs on Dian’s temple,” fancied herself a creature all guilt and deception, because she had so long delayed to make her father’s confidence.

Edward returned from Ford’s, better pleased than he expected: Dr. Dalling was, in every sense of the word, a gentleman. Rose, in every point, a suitable match for him, except, indeed, in the adventitious one of rank, which, when he recollected that a minister can at pleasure bestow it upon the basest and meanest of God’s creatures, did not stand very high in

our hero's estimation, particularly at the present moment. Ford had induced him to believe that Lord Belmont would not vehemently oppose the marriage; why, then, not at once, as he felt he ought to do, open his heart to the father of his beloved?—Why not?—there was a doubt;—

“To sleep—perchance to dream.”

He *might* refuse, and if he did, immediate separation from Rose would necessarily ensue: and to part from her was worse even than the sleep of death, dreams included.

What was to be done?—Rose and he were again together and alone: they met with trembling hesitation—her look was full of mingled modesty and love—so sincere and so devoted—so mild, so gentle, and so pure. He saw, at a glance, that he must not long delay the development to Dalling of his attachment, if he valued her good opinion; for in the melting softness of her look, there mingled something like an expression of reproach for his having failed to keep the promise he had made to see her father on the subject earlier in the day.

Bramley was overcome by his feelings, and, eagerly catching her hand, was about to explain all that had happened. Tears started into his eyes—he drew her towards him, and she unresistingly yielded to the attraction;—he gazed on her for a moment, and overcome by her feelings, her head sank upon his shoulder—when the drawing room door was thrown open, and the servant announced

“The Miss Humbugs!”

who, without farther delay, or before the man could conclude the announcement, burst into the apartment, attended by two white poodles, who barking and scratching the carpet, and jumping over the chairs, formed, together with their grace-like mistresses, an agreeable yet somewhat unexpected addition to a most critical *tête-à-tête*.

“Oh la! I’m sure I beg ten thousand pardons!” cried Miss Humbug. “Come away, Charlotte—come away, dear.”

“Oh, Mr. Bramley! Oh dear! we are so sorry.”

“Good gracious!” exclaimed Fanny; “only think how unlucky! Come, Charlotte, let us

go out and take a little walk, and we'll come back again by and by, when you are better."

Bramley, who was not the least conscious that Rose had, in the outset of the affair, rushed from the room, endeavoured to rally, and with a sort of smile which made his agitated countenance look quite ghastly, exclaimed, "Better!—come, that's exceedingly pleasant—ha! ha! better! Why——"

Here a wandering look, sent round the apartment in search of Rose, who was absent without leave, produced a shout of laughter from the young ladies, as loud and vehement as good breeding permits in civilized society; while the poodles, unrestrained by any such rules, barked louder and frisked about more joyously than ever, wagging their tails, shaking their padlocked collars, and scratching the carpet, as if they were as much delighted at the mischief going on, as the young ladies themselves.

"Where is Miss Dalling?" enquired Miss Charlotte; "she has run away!"

Upon my word," said Bramley, "I—don't know; but if you'll allow me, I'll just go and see."

"Oh, good gracious! by no means!" said

Fanny ; “ we cou’dn’t think of giving you the trouble of going away—we met the Doctor as we came through the Park.”

“ Is he out?” said Bramley.

“ Oh yes,” replied Miss Humbug, “ he’s out—didn’t you know that? ha! ha!”

Bramley stammered out a negative—a silence ensued.

“ Hem!” said Charlotte, somewhat loudly.

A burst of laughter followed. The dogs jumped about again.

“ Charlotte, my love,” said Fanny, “ had not you better ring, and ask if Miss Dalling is coming back?”

“ Shall we, Mr. Bramley?” enquired the eldest sister. “ I’ll go and enquire.”

“ Oh dear, no!” snapped off Fanny, making a face at her sisters. “ Ring, Charlotte, ring the bell.”

Miss Dalling’s maid made her appearance, having, as it seemed, been stationed within reach, with a message.

“ My young lady is so extremely unwell,” said the soubrette, “ that she will not be able to come down, Miss.”

“Oh dear!” said Fanny, (who was the orator generally,) “let us go up and see her, Charlotte. Poor dear! what is the matter with her?—is it her head?”

“I don’t know, Miss,” said Laurence, “but my young lady has lain down.”

“Oh, well, then we won’t disturb her,” said the eldest of Bramley’s tormentors.

“Don’t let us detain *you*,” said Fanny to our hero; “if you ——”

What Fanny might have been going to say, or what Bramley to answer, I know not, for just at the moment when the party were actually breaking up, Dr. Dalling himself entered the room.

Such was the perfection of the Doctor’s unsophistication, that he perceived nothing extraordinary in the salutations of his fair guests, and was more occupied in guarding the fleshy parts of his legs from the attacks of the poodles, than in examining the various expressions of countenance, which were quite ready for his inspection.

“Good morning, ladies,” said the Doctor.

“Good—down, Flo!—be quiet, Pop!”

“Good gracious!” said Fanny, “what dread-

ful creatures these horrid poodles are!—*do* make them lie down, Miss Humbug.”

“Why now, Fanny,” said her eldest sister, “you know you are fonder of the poodles than I am.”

And here an amicable squabble about the poodles ensued, during the rage of which Bramley made a rapid and sudden movement, and succeeded in escaping from the room.

“Where is Rose?” said the Doctor.—“She isn’t very well, Sir,” said Miss Humbug; and the sisters giggled.

“Not well!—how?” said her father; “nothing has happened?”

“Oh dear no,” said Fanny; “I believe we frightened her.”

“What, with the dogs?” said the anxious parent.

“Oh no, not with the dogs,” said Fanny slowly.

“With ourselves, I believe, Sir,” snapped out Charlotte.

“I don’t understand all this,” said Dalling; “is my child ill?”

“Oh dear no, not ill, only a little indis-

posed; she is gone to lie down, and we will go away. Oh dear, where is Mr. Bramley?"

"Good gracious!" said Fanny, "perhaps he is gone to recover her."

Another "laugh general" roused Dalling's suspicions that something strange had occurred, and with a somewhat determined air he left the room, to enquire farther into the business; seizing which opportunity, the young ladies, after having read half of a letter which lay open and unfinished upon Rose's desk, put sand into the ink-bottle, stumped the points of a bundle of new pens against the table, thrown the Indian rubber into the fire, and torn four leaves out of a journal which their friend kept, beat a seasonable retreat, and marched out, laughing immoderately, with eyes sparkling, dogs barking, and all the honours of mischief.

Dalling, in the mean time, had sought and found his child; she had *not* lain down, as she had sent word to her guests she had: when he opened the door of her little boudoir, he found her kneeling beside a sofa, her face hid in her hands, sobbing deeply and convulsively.

He rushed forward, caught her in his arms and pressed her fevered forehead to his heart.

“Rose, my child, my darling, speak to your father; you have been insulted—outraged by these girls—I am sure, quite sure of it. Compose yourself, love; be tranquil.”

Her sobs increased, and with them Dalling’s alarm. He rang the bell, which was near his hand, and, assisted by Laurence, led, or indeed carried, his almost lifeless child to her chamber. He laid his precious charge upon her bed; but she was unconscious of the tender care with which she was treated. She had fainted, and lay before her distracted parent pale, senseless, lifeless.

“What has happened to her?” said Dalling, in a whisper to Laurence.

“I don’t know exactly, Sir,” said the maid; “that is, I ——”

“Did you hear her say?”

“Not—say, Sir.”

“What does it mean?”

“Mean, Sir?”

“Ay, mean.”

“The young ladies came in, and ——”

“Well?”

“ That’s all, Sir.”

“ No, no, that is *not* all. Why does the colour mount in your cheeks? Why are you thus confused? What *has* happened?”

“ Indeed I don’t know all, Sir.”

“ All! all what?”

“ About my dear young mistress’s misfortune.”

“ Misfortune! you’ll drive me mad. What am I to think?”

“ I mean, Sir, —— Thomas saw it, Sir.”

“ Saw—what? Speak out—speak plain——”

Here a deep-drawn sigh from Rose suddenly called her father’s attention to his suffering child: she opened her eyes, they moved vacantly round the room—till, lighting on her parent, she again burst into a flood of tears, and hid her face in the pillow.

“ What does it mean, woman?” asked Dal-ling; whose anxiety for information proportionately increased with the decrease of his solicitude for Rose’s personal safety.——

“ What did Thomas see?”

“ No harm, Sir, I’m sure, Sir, only——”

“ Go on.”

“ Mr. Bramley and my young mistress

were alone in the room when the young ladies called, and ——”

“ Well! What of that?”

“ They found ’em out, Sir.”

“ Gracious God, protect my senses! Found out who? What wretched falsehoods are you speaking? My child—My Rose! Bramley, where is he?”

“ He went out, Sir, the moment you returned.”

“ Am I alive, and have I lived to this?—What’s to be done?—Here—stay by this suffering angel; send for advice—send ——”

“ My father!” exclaimed Rose, “ I hear my father’s voice—Mercy, mercy on a wretched girl!” And a second relapse was the consequence of the exertion.

Dalling was bewildered—he had heard,

“ Why so much, and why not more?”

the agony of his mind was beyond expression; something *had* happened—something apparently full of horror; such was the intensity of his agitation that he dared not enquire farther at the moment. Leaving his daughter to the care of the maid, he hurried off a ser-

vant for medical advice, and himself sought, and sought in vain, for Bramley.

Ardent, impassioned, full of fire, vivacity, and animation—the blow Edward had received was too much for his mind at the moment, and quite unconscious of his actions he had left the Parsonage, and walking fast and faster, and faster still, as if *that* would dissipate his agonizing reflections, had, long before Dalling went in quest of him, reached the copse which you see from the drawing-room windows of Burrowdale, and where, in their days of peaceful unsuspecting happiness, Rose had so often met him on his return from shooting, and whence they had together so often bent their steps towards the Rectory.

There is no mistake greater than that into which people fall, who fancy a lively disposition an insensible one ;—those whose feelings are always alive, whose passions are capable of strong excitement, and whose animal spirits are the highest and most volatile, are those upon whom sad, sudden changes from happiness to misery, have the most poignant effects.—The fall—the wreck—the annihilation of all Edward's views—the exposure of the creature

he loved best upon earth to the sneers and taunts of those he liked the least—the abrupt arrival of the crisis which he had so anxiously desired to avoid—the certainty that he should be misrepresented, that Rose would be wretched—that her father's opinion of him, judging by his conduct, would induce him to refuse his consent—the having subjected the pure angel to a suspicion of duplicity towards a parent from whom before she never had concealed a thought—all these considerations burst upon him at once, and the sight of that scene, of those well-remembered trees which had shaded them together while he and the being he loved, as pure and guileless as our first parents, wandered through their own dear paradise of Emerton, threw him into an agony of grief.

Never surely was there an instance of more sudden and decided alteration in a *love affair* than that which it has been my duty to describe at this period of my little narrative. In one short hour, two hearts, united by nature and the purest affection, were separated; perhaps for ever; separated too, under circumstances so peculiar, so harassing, so frightful!

Dalling having in vain searched for Bramley, returned again to his sorrowing daughter ; he found her calmer and more composed, but a death-like paleness had usurped the place of those burning blushes which had coloured her feverish cheek during her first interview with him ; she seemed transfixed to her seat, and her down-cast eyes were not even raised at the approach of her beloved, her dreaded parent.

To the world, the gay world of *this* world, it may appear that the effects produced upon Rose Dalling by the discovery of Bramley and herself under the circumstances I have described were supernaturally strong ; but no, to a being like Rose, whose mind was unsullied and unsophisticated, the thought that she had so far compromised the dignity of her character as to have suffered unrepulsed, nay more, to have yielded to the advances of an unsanctioned lover, and that she had done so clandestinely, without the privity, without the permission of her father, struck deep, deep into her heart.

To a young woman more accustomed to *society* and its ways, perhaps the fact of being “ found out,” would have been *that* which

would most have militated against her peace of mind ; although whilst our girls are not only suffered, but taught to exhibit their wanton graces publicly in the arms of any indifferent persons with whom they may be thrown in society, and perform the foreign waltz, and all its clingings and twistings, with more than Grecian or Indian readiness, the simple circumstance of being discovered clasped round the waist by a sincere and ardent suitor when there was “ nobody by,” would not, I dare say, be by them considered so very terrible ; yet, it was NOT the *discovery* of her relative situation with Edward which affected Rose,—it was the discovery to herself of the *real* state of her own heart which could have betrayed her into such a situation !—it was the consciousness of dissimulation with her father ;—it was, in short, a combination of feelings inexplicable upon paper. Those whose minds are constructed as Rose Dalling’s was, will appreciate her sentiments ; those whose characters are differently constituted, and whose principles are differently formed, would never understand them if I wrote a folio.

That the event had had the effect I vainly endeavour to describe, is true : her father, who full of confidence in his child, still trembled at what the insinuations and whisperings which he had collected from the servants seemed to *imply*, was wretched too ; at once his own incaution in the conduct of the acquaintance of Bramley with his daughter flashed into his mind, and so strongly did conviction come upon him, that when he recurred to their inseparable intimacy, the reproaches he was at first prepared to cast upon *her*, faltered upon his tongue, and recoiled upon himself in the effort to utter them.

Rose made no attempt to speak. Dalling took her hand—she pressed his, as if unconsciously ; she still kept her eyes fixed upon the table before her, but not a tear started from them. Her father convulsively grasped the hand he held—their eyes at the moment met ;—and what a language is that of eyes ? Dalling read, in the single heart-rending look she gave, at once her wretchedness and her innocence !

Persons who have expected ill news, have experienced an indescribable dread of breaking

the black seal of the letter which they believed to contain it.—So felt Dalling when relieved, as he felt himself, from apprehensions which nothing but the extraordinary stories of the domestics could have led him for a moment to entertain—something *had* happened, and his beloved child was suffering under the effect of insult. Had Bramley dared?—he looked at Rose, and decided that to be impossible.

After a lengthened period of rest, the poor heart-broken girl recovered sufficiently to speak to her father, and even to converse with him, but she could not force herself to tell him the real cause of her present misery: she spoke of shame, mortification, and sorrow, but she could not be her own historian where she knew that the whole truth was essential to be told, and yet was so inculpatory of her own conduct as she felt it to be.

Her persevering silence upon the topic had, as my reader may easily anticipate, one effect: that of obliging Dalling to apply himself to another equally authentic source for information: what effect that application was to have, we shall presently see.

I have often remarked, in domestic afflic-

tion, in the hour of peril, or the day of trial, the curious contrast afforded to the distracting agitation of a family, in the regular preparation and exhibition of meals at their stated hours, the matter-of-fact march of servants, who, entering as little into the spirit of passing occurrences as a signal-man, who at a repeating-post mechanically hoists on his halliards the most important and interesting intelligence without a consciousness of its weight or value, procure, provide, and prepare, the soup, the fish, the meat, the entrées, the vol-au-vents, the fricandeaux, the risolles, the charlottes, and the fondus, as regularly and systematically as if there were no grief, no sorrow in the world; nay, even when Death himself has been busy, and the lifeless corpse of our best-beloved lies stretched in the last long sleep, we are summoned to our meals as regularly as if nothing extraordinary had occurred in the family.

Upon this principle, dinner was, as usual, announced at six. The meeting between Bramley and Dalling was embarrassing and painful in the highest degree; and though the repast was there in due form, the vanity of the cook could by no means have been flattered if she

judged of her proficiency in gastronomy by the quantity of dainties demolished. Silence, seldom broken, reigned throughout the ceremony, and the troubled looks of both the performers were not lost upon the servants who waited, one of whom was the same who opened the drawing-room door and announced the Misses Humbugs in the morning.

Little was therefore likely to be elicited from the *tête-à-tête*, while subject to the surveillance of the attendants, and perhaps it will be as well that I should not attempt to describe what passed, after they had retired, between Bramley and the Doctor. The joy the latter felt in finding his young friend the ingenuous, high-minded, honourable person he had always thought him to be, qualified the anxiety he felt about Rose; and although he *at once* decided that until the full and free acquiescence of Lord Belmont could be obtained to such a measure, a marriage with his child was wholly out of the question, he could not refrain from recurring to his own thoughtlessness in having suffered the intimacy between the young people to continue so long and so uninterruptedly.

Bramley urged with all the ardour of youth and affection the non-necessity of a measure which Dalling declared to be inevitable and indispensable—I mean his immediate removal from Emmerton Rectory: it seemed as if his existence depended upon the old gentleman's recantation of his *fiat* touching this movement; nor did the cause lose any thing from a want of eloquence in the young pleader. He represented, not only the misery and wretchedness which his banishment would infallibly produce to *him*, (not to speak of Rose's feelings,) but he endeavoured to throw his arguments into a train which he fancied still more likely to touch the Doctor's heart and move his pity.

He showed with great ingenuity the disadvantageous impression which would be made upon the world—(of Emmerton, I presume he meant)—by the malicious representations of the young female visitors by whom they had been surprised; and maintained with some show of reason that his departure immediately after the awkward *denouement*, would give a colouring of probability to the falsehoods which doubtless such scandal-mongers as the

Humbugs would most assiduously disseminate throughout the circle of their acquaintance.

To say truth, his assumption of this line of reasoning was by no means injudicious; even Dalling himself admitted the justice of his observations upon the point, but not quite so readily, or so cordially, as the youthful advocate wished or anticipated.

Dalling knew the integral value of his daughter, he knew the character of those from whom attacks were to be expected, and more than that, the world knew their character as well as *he* did; and although the event itself was a very unpleasant one, still he thought that no consideration should induce him to alter the resolution he had made of separating Bramley and his child forthwith.

There is a proverb about "shutting the stable door after the steed is stolen," which might certainly have been applied with great effect to this judgematic precaution of the Reverend Doctor. The die was cast, and, let what might be the event, the affection which existed between the parties most deeply concerned, was of a nature the least likely to be affected by separation—a test very wisely used if applied

to a doubtful case, but which only decides the character of a real attachment.

To be sure, the scene of Lord Belmont's diplomatic greatness was at no very considerable distance from England, and a fortnight would afford ample time for an application and an answer: yet to a lover, a fortnight's separation, with the probability, as Bramley himself felt, unless he entailed the implacable displeasure of his father by acting for himself, of its being eternal, was not to be regarded placidly or patiently. But the Doctor, alas! was firmly resolved that his abdication of Emmerton *must be enforced* on the instant.

It was thought by alling, Dhowever, that immediate as the separation ought to be, he was bound by every consideration to carry his point without any unnecessary harshness; and he felt that if Bramley left the Rectory that evening, as he intended he should do, it would be but right, considerate, and even prudent, as regarded the interest of *her*, for whom he was naturally most anxious, that the lovers, for such they now avowedly were, should, if her spirits were strong enough to bear it, meet and separate in such a manner as might convince the servants

(whose *opinion*, it is true, could be but of little consequence, but whose *report* upon the subject might be important) that no ground existed for anger or resentment, either on the part of Rose or her father, against Bramley.

Never did negotiator more readily admit the propriety of a suggestion than our hero, who saw, in its fulfilment, his only chance of once more beholding his Rose before they parted—perhaps eternally!

Dalling, I must confess, even at the moment he was taking these “better-late-than-never” precautions, felt that in point of fact they were rigid perhaps overmuch, because he did not see why Lord Belmont should refuse his consent. Edward, strengthened by what Ford had told him in the morning, assured the Doctor that his father had not pledged him to any other alliance, and the exemplary clergyman saw no just reason to doubt the acquiescence of the new-made nobleman in the union between their families.—Good easy man! how little did he know of His Excellency Baron Belmont, G.C.B. St.A. & St. P., of his Lordship’s views, his Lordship’s feelings, or his Lordship’s character!

The promised interview between Edward and Rose took place early in the evening, and I think I need hardly say that it was one continued strain of embarrassment and nervousness from its beginning unto its end. It was satisfactory but to one person of the trio: Darling beheld, in the manner and conduct of his young associates, the strongest and most deciding marks of virtue and innocence on the one side, of devoted affection and *unqualified* respect on the other. The servants, for whom the exhibition was chiefly gotten up, took a new tone from what they saw; and Laurence, who in the early part of the day appeared somewhat horrified at her young lady's indiscretion, summed up a most eloquent harangue in her defence by laying it down as her opinion (founded, perhaps, upon practice) that "after all, it was only a kiss, and she was sure there was no great harm in that."

The moment of separation arrived; Bramley's servant had directions to prepare for immediate departure, and at nine o'clock in the evening of *that* day which had opened with the brightest views to the fond lovers, my hero

left the scene of all his happiest hours, and stepped into the carriage which was destined to convey him to London, whither he had determined to proceed, in order, as far as possible to comply with his noble father's expressed, or more properly, implied desire, in hopes thereby to evince a readiness and obedience upon one point, which might soften the lord upon another, which, *at the moment*, he believed himself incapable of abandoning.

To describe the separation of Rose and Edward would be vain; indeed their last interview was abruptly terminated by her rushing from the room. To see him go, was more than she was prepared for; and the store of spirits which she had accumulated, lasted her just long enough to hear his carriage announced, and no longer. Determined to save them both pangs which were unavailing, she quitted the drawing-room, and sought, in the solitude of her own chamber, and in the never-failing consolations of religion, alleviation from the earliest worldly sorrow her innocent heart had ever known.

It was in vain Bramley solicited a parting—

look, perhaps—some token of her affection; her father interposed no authority to prevent it—but she could not endure the last pang—the last blow of fate which was to cut the knot—perhaps, for ever!

Dalling attended his young friend to the door—they neither spoke—Bramley descended the steps—

——— “ His eye being big with tears,
 “ Turning his face, he put his hand behind him,
 “ And with affection wondrous sensible,
 “ He wrung BASSANIO’s hand—and so they parted.”

* * * * *

It was long before poor Rose recovered the sudden shock of separation from her heart’s “ avowed lord ;” nor was her restoration at all accelerated by two or three “ *kind*” messages of *enquiry* from her fair friends at Burrowdale. Dalling, indeed, felt it necessary to come to an explanation with the head of that family, who declared upon his word he had never, directly or indirectly, heard a syllable about the affair, having devoted the whole of the

two preceding days to making *extempore* epigrams upon the *embarras* of the young lovers !

Ford was the person most surprised at Darling's firmness of conduct in the business—he had evidently miscalculated his man ; he felt it, however, his duty *immediately* to apprise the noble ambassador, of the decided turn his private affairs appeared to be taking, and despatched a letter, which he was particularly anxious should reach his Excellency, if possible, before that, which he knew Edward would surely address to him.

Rachel Ford called upon Rose, and in the most artless manner congratulated her upon the approaching event, offered up some fervent prayers for her happiness, and proceeded with perfect calmness to go through a kind of lecture upon the “ Whole Duty of Woman ;” to which Rose, who felt herself drawn out and held up to public observation most unexpectedly and uncovetedly, listened with a thousand agitating emotions, wholly unknown to Miss Ford, or ladies of her character and constitution.

Incidentally, Rachel made an attack upon Dr. Dalling, touching the annual arrival of a theatrical corps at Emmerton, which was then shortly expected: she declaimed against the vanity and mummary of the stage with an eloquence almost super-human, and implored him, as a magistrate and a clergyman, to interpose his authority to prevent the exhibition of their diabolical manœuvrings in her peaceful native town.

The Honourable and Reverend predecessor of the present rector had greatly scandalized poor Miss Ford, not only by suffering the performances of these vagabonds, but in patronizing, and actually countenancing their exhibitions by his personal attendance, which, to use the artless Rachel's own words, "literally made her blood run cold, and her hair stand on end!"

The reception her animated appeal met with from Dalling, was not exactly what she wished or expected; he did not quite so readily, as she thought he should have done, admit the hopelessness, temporally or spiritually, of the poor players' case; he did not catch, as she expected, the awful symptoms of "uncom-

bining locks," and freezing blood, with which she wished him to be forthwith infected; nay, he went so far as to defend the "stage players," as she called them, warmly and strongly from the sweeping and unqualified censure with which she was pleased, in the zealotry of her goodness, to load them.

Rachel was astonished that a minister of God should palliate the heinous offences of face-painting and assumption of character. That he should rank the efforts of the actor with those of the artist or the sculptor, to whom he observed, with equal justice, might be attributed the fancied sin of mockery, since the very essence of their skill was the power of imitating nature in all her beauties and perfection as closely as possible, seemed to her awfully terrible. But when he proceeded to avow his opinion, that the stage was, in some degree, and might certainly be rendered still more so, a school of morals, the young saint was nearly overcome by her feelings, and ejaculated (not mentally, but loudly and groaningly,) "Dear, dear, Doctor Dalling, what would Mr. Hogsflesh say if he heard you?"

Mr. Hogsflesh was, *entre nous*, a portly, rosy-

cheeked, wire-haired “minister,” who might be heard every Sunday in Mr. Ford’s chapel, or, indeed, in any contiguous part of the neighbourhood, pouring forth torrents of extempore eloquence, which passed for wisdom with the million, because “they understood it not.”

Dalling, unawed by the promised, or rather threatened fulminations from the tub of Mr. Hogsflesh, maintained his ground of defence stoutly, and quitting for a moment the argument he had originally taken up, which was merely in vindication of the *public* character of dramatic performances, he called Miss Ford’s attention to the closing hours of the greatest actor *we* remember, “from the account of which,” said the Doctor, “may be gathered the fact that theatrical pursuits are not incompatible with morality and virtue;—many of those,” added he, “Miss Ford, who affect to scorn the art of a man who *imitates* others, would be, too, happy in the last scenes of life to be able to imitate *him*.”

“But surely, Sir,” said Miss Ford, with an animation somewhat unusual, her brows elevated, and her eyes naturally sparkling with

zeal, "surely you do not defend plays and playhouses upon principle?"

"Indeed, but I do, Miss Ford," said the rector. "It is a mistaken enthusiasm which strews fire and flame in the paths of our innocent amusement: depend upon it, my dear young lady, that the doctrines by which we may all hope to be saved are friendly to harmless recreation, and hostile to that squalid superstition which would strip society of its pleasantries, and mirth of its smile. What end, may I ask, can be obtained, by casting an artificial gloom over our transitory lives? There is quite enough of inherent solicitude in them, without seeking for sorrows to depress us unnecessarily. I do not deny that there is much to condemn, to blush at, and to tremble for, in the conduct of some portion of the people who frequent theatres; but such conduct and such actions are not essential to that particular amusement; and I firmly believe, that if there were no playhouses in the metropolis, vice and immorality would find other and more secure and secluded scenes of action."

"Well, but then, Sir," said the zealous puritan, "Emmerton is not London; and here

we know of no vices, we have no depravity going on, why introduce it by suffering these abominable actors to perform in *this* place?"

"The strongest possible proof of the truth and soundness of my argument," replied Dal-ling, "will be found in this very permission.—As you say, here we have no vice, I mean comparatively with the metropolis: we have no shameless licentiousness parading triumphantly through our streets, neither shall we see it in our little theatre."

"Oh, Sir, the very fact—the very influence of the play itself would create vice and ——"

"There I entirely differ with you, Miss Ford; you may depend upon the truth of the poet, who tells us that

'Vice is a monster of such hideous mien,
As to be hated, needs but to be seen;'

and the prevalent sympathy of an audience is uniformly favourable to virtue. In any play, where innocence rises triumphant over its oppressors—where charity is found dispensing its divine gifts—where the best feelings and principles of humanity gain the victory, the public uniformly pay their tribute of applause and satisfaction; and even if there be a play

in the language, which I scarcely think there is, acted at least at present, where doctrines are inculcated, or principles supported, contrary to those by which religion, honour, and propriety are maintained, I am quite sure the effect of the representation would be that of disgusting the incipient votary of crime, while the piece would meet the decided reprobation of all the respectable portion of the audience."

These opinions were held to be inadmissible by Miss Ford, who left the rectory convinced that ruin must inevitably ensue, now that the "*good*" parson of the parish advocated plays and players; and she communed long and seriously the same evening with her counsellor and confessor, Mr. Aaron Hogsflesh, on this most vital and appalling subject.

Ford's mind seemed greatly and deeply interested in the affair of Edward and Rose; its extraordinary explosion and premature development considerably discomposed him; but, as the proverb says, "that which cannot be cured, must be endured," and since the affair had been *bruited* about, it became on his part a bounden duty to his client to shape the report in such a manner as to make the results

favourable in every point of view to the noble ambassador and his only son. What Ford chiefly feared at the moment was, that the attachment itself was not sufficiently ripe for his purpose : whatever that might be, that he *had* in view objects, and objects to *him* of the greatest and most vital importance, I cannot deny ; but, how the present circumstances affected those views at the precise period of which I am now treating, I cannot say. The effect produced upon his conduct towards Edward was striking: he forced upon the young heir on his departure for London, a thousand pounds, being, as Edward repeatedly told him, a much larger sum than he could possibly have any occasion for during his stay in town; but Ford blessed him fervently, and, in the midst of prayers for his happiness, appeared to hint at a probability that his absence from Emmerton might be somewhat protracted; and so cordially and affectionately did the attached man express himself towards his young and honoured friend, that Edward accepted the advance, or loan, whichever it might be considered, literally in fear of offending him, by

an unnecessary appearance of reluctance to be under an obligation to him.

The mysterious allusions to lengthened absence from Rose, were not at all calculated to soothe his sorrows at the moment of separation; but, puzzle himself as he would, he could not at all perceive how, unless he made himself a party to them, any measures could be taken which would keep him from her for a longer space of time than was actually necessary for the exchange of despatches between his father and himself.

Edward's intention during his short stay in London was, to make those visits of ceremony which his forced absence from Emmerton gave him so good an opportunity of making, and which, as I before said, he thought would conciliate his haughty sire; but it was, as we shall see, a great misfortune, that in his conduct towards his son, Lord Belmont had adopted not only the mysterious language, but the uncandid conduct of skilful negotiation: he seemed always making efforts to "manage" the young man, to manœuvre him, as it were, to his purpose; when, if he had adopted the simple expedient of "speaking

out," and going straight forward, what *did* happen, in all probability, would not have happened, and much distress and irritation have been spared.

After Edward's departure, Miss Ford's zeal touching the players was greatly worked upon by the sympathetic ardour of Mr. Hogsflesh, who, indeed, was a powerful man, and a much-esteemed pastor. She was, it must be confessed, so completely led away by her devotion to the interests of religion, that after the close of the evening, she had, with the consent and support of her spiritual Mentor, resolved upon a measure, of which, as I promise my reader she will eventually carry it into effect, I think I had better not spoil the interest, by any unseasonable anticipation.

Very much to the relief of Rose, the Burrowdale family called, *en masse*, to take leave. She did not see them; the grinding of their carriage-wheels over the gravelled sweep sounded a retreat for her; but she felt her heart considerably lightened when she saw by their tickets that it was a P. P. Cing visit. The malice of the girls on the occasion had been greatly constrained by the excessive good-

nature of their father, who, in spite of the epigrams, saw the affair in its proper light, and, as he told Dalling, felt convinced that he should have the satisfaction, eventually, of surrendering Burrowdale Park into the possession of the blooming Rose and her happy husband.

Things, however, were not to fall out quite so conveniently ; the intelligence which the noble ambassador received from Ford reached him by express previously to the arrival of Edward's letter, and decided him to take a step little expected by any of the parties concerned, and by no means desired by some of them. This was no other than immediately to avail himself of the permission he had long before received, to return home for a short period. How Ford had represented the affair to his Lordship, we shall hereafter see. Suffice it at the present moment to say, that his anger knew no bounds on the perusal of his despatch : his feelings were not less irritated by his son's state of the case, for, as Ford had contrived it, the impression was made, the influence over him had been attained, before he received Edward's letter.

The reply which he immediately despatched

to his son was couched in terms of the highest disrespect towards the Dallings, of whom he spoke in language so unusually explicit as to induce Edward to think that he must have made an erroneous estimate of their characters, and yet it seemed to him almost impossible that he should know enough of them to form any opinion upon the subject at all.

The letter, however, was such as to render it impossible for him to impart its contents to the Dallings; the tone in which it was written, the objections which were specified, and, indeed, the whole tenour of the communication was such as to preclude the possibility of even alluding to it in a correspondence or interview with the Doctor or his daughter.

Half distracted, half wild with contending feelings, Edward resolved, and was supported in his resolution by Ford, to start for the Continent; this at all events would delay the crisis—it would evince to Rose the warmth of his attachment, and to his father the strength of his resolution: the thought once entertained, the feeling once excited, a few hours only were required to put it into execution. Political reasons induce me to conceal the place of his

destination : suffice it to say, that passing through Emmerton to embark for it, would not be attended with any very considerable inconvenience, and Edward thought that a few minutes' conversation and consultation with Ford before his departure, would be extremely satisfactory, of which, by managing his matters well, he felt he could contrive to avail himself without discovering to the Dallings that he was actually in their neighbourhood.

Some youthful readers who, perhaps, are labouring under Edward's malady at this very moment, may imagine the fact that Ford resided in the same town with Rose, to have had some weight in this decision ; be that as it may, it was one to which Ford himself would never have allowed him to come, could he have avoided it : the journey to the Continent was a measure which would have met his hearty concurrence, but a return to Emmerton was what he most dreaded, and at the same time least anticipated.

In this country of bowling-green roads and anti-*attritionated* wheels, a *trajet* such as that from town to Emmerton is not worth noticing : in a light travelling carriage with his own man

alone in the rumble-tumble, our hero flew along the level plains, mounted the rising hills, and swept the sloping valleys of the great western road without let or hindrance, and in the dusk of the evening of the second journeying day left his chaise at the turning into his native town, and walked along the road, his heart palpitating with ten thousand conflicting sentiments till he reached the well-known house of Mr. Amos Ford.

Lifting the huge and shining lion's-head, of which I have already spoken, he knocked at the door, which was almost instantly opened by a servant he did not know, wearing his own family livery : there was little room for doubt or mystery—it was his father's servant.

“ Was Mr. Ford at home ? ” — “ Yes. ”
 “ Alone ? ” — “ No, Sir, Lord Belmont is with him, ” was the answer.

The softest breeze that ever tossed about the gossamer would have sufficed to sweep his Lordship's son and heir from the place where he stood ; his father—his dreaded angry father was at hand, and all his ire ready to burst upon his devoted anxious child : the man

proceeded—Ford's servants being, as most servants are, any where but where they should have been—to throw open the library-door, and announce Mr. Bramley, who had given his name without knowing what he was doing, and who followed the man mechanically towards his father's presence; towards it—but alas, not into it.

The instant his name was mentioned the Peer started from his seat, and exclaimed:

“Ford, I insist upon being protected from insult! What is the meaning of this trick? Leave the room, Sir,” said his Lordship to the servant; “shut the door—I am busy—I am not at home, Sirrah;—d’ ye hear?”

Ford leaped from his chair, and after casting a pacifying look at his Lordship, proceeded to repel Edward's attempt to enter the apartment: the servant, somewhat amazed, resigned the handle of the door into the hand of Ford, who endeavoured to telegraph his unwelcome visitor away, indicating by signs that the moment he had chosen for his appearance there was not the best suited to the purpose he doubtlessly had in view.

Ford's respect, however, for the son of his

noble client would not permit him to perform this service harshly or even determinately, and when Edward, catching a glimpse of his father's countenance, pale with rage, his eyes casting their fires around, pressed towards him, the attorney was staggered in his purpose, and in all probability would have yielded to the impulse of mingled awe and fear, had not his Lordship, after vociferating to him to close the door, rushed forward, and pushing him forcibly away shut it upon his child, whose piercing cry of "Father! Father!" was drowned in the violence of the noble Lord's execrations upon his head and the rattling of the lock with which his Lordship secured himself from farther interruption.

Edward had been prepared for strong opposition to his union with Rose, but certainly never anticipated conduct bordering so closely upon insanity as that which my Lord Belmont was pleased to display upon this occasion, nor could he account for it. It was true that Dal-ling was a commoner, but he was a gentleman, whose grandfather had, in the pride of family feeling, refused a similar honour to that, which *his* father had anxiously sought and gladly ac-

cepted. In the one scale was a patent hardly dry, a riband and a star—in the other was beauty, sense, virtue, excellence!—To the prejudiced mind of the ardent lover it appeared by no means doubtful which should kick the beam, and with his knowledge of his father's character, he felt convinced that he must be labouring under some delusion with respect to the family at the Rectory, and that some mischievous person must have been at work, undermining their reputation and impugning their respectability.

In a few moments after his forcible expulsion, if expulsion it may be called, considering that he had not actually entered the apartment, Edward, who remained paralyzed in the hall, was awakened from his trance of horror by the friendly voice of Ford, who came evidently to soothe away some of the grief which the extraordinary reception he had met with from his father had caused; but he came not commissioned by that father so to do. The bitterness of paternal anger was increased by the presence of his son, and Ford's orders were to force him not only to leave the house, then, but to avoid it during his Lordship's stay at Em-

merton, which, it appeared, was intended to be very short, however important the measures which he might see fit to adopt pending its continuance.

Ford, after temporizing with Edward for some time, assured him that no power on earth would induce his father to admit him to his presence until he had formally renounced all connexion with the Dallings; "and," said Ford, "that condition, my dear young friend, I know it is impossible to ask—to expect, you to comply with: even *I*, who am most anxious for your reconciliation with your father, could not advocate such an abandonment of principle as the price of even so great an advantage. You must marry her, Mr. Bramley, you must; that is my opinion, and I have given it strongly to his Lordship."

"But tell me, Ford," said Edward, "where has my father collected materials for forming his opinion of the Dallings? He knows nothing of them—can know nothing of them, but by report: who, then, has calumniated them so grossly, as to induce him to spurn contemptuously an alliance, of which a monarch might be proud?"

“The Lord in his wisdom only knows the hearts of men, Mr. Bramley,” said Ford; “I have prayed incessantly during the last three nights, that I might be put upon some way of conciliating matters, but it seems not fit that I should: and as for the traducers of the family, it is a sad world, and its wickednesses are manifold.”

“Those ideotic girls could not have stimulated my father’s dislike towards Miss Dalling by any abominable misrepresentations of that morning’s visit?”

“It is not probable that they have had any communication with your noble father since, as I should conceive.”

“What does it mean, then? Will he see Rose? Will he be introduced to Dalling?”

“He would die first, and see *us* perish too.”

“What does he propose? Will he not see *me*, then?”

“Not till you have relinquished the connexion; which I declare, under Divine Providence, I see no possibility of your doing. At present, however, I would recommend your leaving the house—you may remain at either of the inns; and I would have you do so at

all events till to-morrow: perhaps something may happen to brighten our prospects, and if it should please the kindness of Heaven to grant us a relief, you will be at hand to reap the advantages."

"How long does my father stay?"

"Only till to-morrow evening."

"Am I then to understand, Ford, that an eternal separation from my father is the consequence of my marriage with Rose?"

"The Disposer of all human events may soften the hearts of the most obdurate,—but ——"

Here a tremendous peal from the library-bell announced that His Excellency Baron Belmont, G. C. B. St. A. and St. P. was in a violent passion, and impatient for Ford's return. Such a summons was not to be unheeded; and Ford, with less ceremony than he would at any other time have shewn to his noble client's eldest son, assisted him to the street-door, where, squeezing his hand, he parted with him for the evening with this brief, yet cordial advice:

"Marry the girl, you will be justified to yourself; and a clear conscience, and your

own honest heart, will put you above the little ills of this transitory world. God bless you, Sir!"

He pressed his hand again, and the tear stood in the meek man's eye. Edward could have worshipped him, and felt, as he turned from the steps of his house, the blessing he enjoyed in such a friend.

Little prepared was Edward, heart-full as he was, for a sight which flashed upon him like a fearful vision at this eventful moment. He had scarcely quitted the steps of Ford's house, when he encountered a servant, bearing, after the fashion of Emmerton, a bright-beaming lantern, wherewith to guide the steps of his beloved Rose and her father, who, in the primitive simplicity of that unsophisticated neighbourhood, were, at an hour so early, returning homeward from one of those sociable parties which I have, in the beginning of my narrative, feebly attempted to describe. The light was strong—the persons well known to each other. Rose saw Bramley; her sudden tremor awakened Dalling's observation—he saw him too. Edward stood motionless; they passed him; Rose looked upon her father as

if she had seen a spectre: Edward turned to gaze upon them as if some dreadful vision had flitted by; his brain was fired—the deliberation was momentary; he followed, overtook, and spoke to them.

“I thought,” said Dalling, with his natural coolness, “I could not be mistaken; when did you return, Mr. Bramley?”

The quiet, composed manner of Dalling, who during the absence of Bramley had been pursuing his ordinary avocations perfectly free from all the bustle and agitation which had characterized his young friend's proceedings during the same period, completely upset our hero, who had conjured up in his mind a different reception from the Doctor. He literally was incapable of speaking—hardly of moving: he stammered out something to Rose, who in turn replied not much more intelligibly; and having mechanically joined them, he walked with them towards the Rectory, without calculating the difficulty and embarrassment into which they were leading each other. The Rectory was his home, had been his home for years;—to enter it now, would be to imply that he had obtained that sanction which alone was want-

ing to his happiness; to decline, would be at once to declare the hopelessness of the case.

The immediate presence of the servant hindered the Doctor from touching upon *the* subject, even remotely, till they had reached the entrance of the grounds, when in an undertone he said to Edward, "Did you come down with Lord Belmont? I hear from Miss Ford that he is here."

"No, not with him," said Edward.

"You have seen him, of course?"

"Yes," said Edward, descending to an equivocation to avoid the consequences which he too well foresaw would result from an admission of his father's feelings upon the great question at issue, "I *have* seen him."

The bell of the rectory-gate sounded through the stillness of the night; the crisis had arrived, and never did a trifling event awaken stronger sensations: all his doubts and fears, hopes and anxieties, were revived by this ominous sound.

To enter the house was to temporize and trifle with Rose's feelings; to quit it, was to quit it eternally: the struggle was one of principle against passion. The gate was opened; he

pressed the hand of his beloved Rose, and turned away without saying one word—his heart was too full—how could he speak?

All doubt, as far as Dalling was concerned, was at an end, and the mysterious insinuations of Miss Ford, who had paid a visit that morning to the Rectory, were now cleared up. Rose, however, wondered, if Edward was sure of his father's disapprobation, why he had not been more decided in the avowal of it. The feverish state of all parties at this crisis may be better imagined than described; but scarcely had Edward reached the inn, where, if he were not to sleep, at least his sleeping-room was engaged, before he reproached himself with a want of candour in not having at once stated the case as it stood, in not having explained the violence of his father's hostility, and in not having avowed the determination, which in fact he had made, of uniting himself to Rose in the teeth of the paternal malediction with which he was threatened.

Ford, however, whose activity in behalf of the young couple was extremely amiable, and moreover very remarkable, was at Edward's bed-side before the first crowing of the cock.

He enquired whether he had seen the Dalings—what the Doctor had said—what explanation he had given of affairs, and what determination he himself had come to? throwing out during the whole of his conversation hints and innuendoes of probable forgiveness, temporary anger, and hasty passions soon cooled; all of which, if Edward could have hoped that he was authorized to adopt them, he would have been too happy to receive and admit; but he was not so sanguine as his excellent friend Ford, and told that gentleman how little was to be hoped from any relaxation of Lord Belmont's present hostility.

“Then marry her without your father's consent,” said Ford, bursting from his usual demure and placid manner into a tone of enthusiastic energy: “she is perfection, and her love and her society will recompense you for the loss of every other object upon earth.”

Never was mortal more astonished than Edward at this eruption of lax morality from his sanctified Mentor. To say that he was displeased would be saying that which is not strictly true—he had debated the same question, and weighed the curse of a parent, and

eternal exclusion from his house and heart, against the happiness derivable from an union with so much excellence as he was sure to possess in Rose Dalling;—to find himself thus supported in a scheme of filial disobedience by a man so strictly good and just as Ford, gave a new turn to his thoughts, and he saw in that, which an hour before he considered an act of ingratitude, nothing beyond the common resistance of oppression which nature and reason admit to be just and dignified.

“ I *will* marry her, Ford,” said Edward, “and tell my father so.”

“ Well said, my excellent, honourable young friend,” said Ford; “ write, write this determination, and send your note to your father immediately.”

“ What will be the result, Ford?”

“ Great and violent anger on the part of his Lordship for a day or two;—but I know his heart—I know how he loves you, and depend upon it our prayers to Heaven for your restoration to his favour, will not be unheard.”

“ Stay,” said Edward, “ I will write now—half-a-dozen lines will convey the straight-forward meaning I have to express. I want none of the diplomatic circumlocution which my

father adopts ; plain facts require plain words. I love Rose Dalling, Ford,—she loves me.”

“ And you will marry her ? I always said so ; I told my excellent Rachel I knew your honour and principle too well to doubt you.”

Edward during this last part of Ford's observations was employed in writing the note to his father, which was to produce effects the least expected by him, and the farthest different from those *openly* anticipated by Ford in his encouraging arguments for the marriage. The deed was done, the note sealed, directed, and delivered to the Friend of the Family, who, believing in the ready acquiescence of the Dallings, fancied he had gained the great point of his scheme, the main object he had in view.

A house divided against itself cannot stand long, says the proverb, and a very striking verification of the adage will be found in the conduct of Miss Ford upon the present occasion. Absorbed in her religious duties, and in her moral and charitable visitings of the poor and sick, she attended too little to things of worldly interest to understand the cause of

her father's anxiety about the marriage of Edward with Rose; but when she did condescend to canvass mundane matters, she never could comprehend why, when she knew his original object was to secure Edward as a husband for *her*, he should now appear to use all his zeal, religion, activity, and ability, in bringing about an event which must finally and totally destroy the possibility of ever consummating the still wished-for union between herself and the heir of the noble house of Belmont.

Little did Ford think while he was preparing Edward for the step which he most desired him to take, that his excellent and exemplary daughter was, in a stroll before breakfast, under the Rectory trees, pouring into the ear of the sensitive Rose the whole of Lord Belmont's anger at the projected marriage, his fixed determination, should it take place, to quit England *never to return*, shutting his heart against his son during his life, and bequeathing him at his death nothing but his title and his curse. Little did Ford imagine that in the pure, cold, and gentle heart of his beloved Rachel, there could exist a rankling feeling of jealousy, which had for its object the separation of those fond

lovers whose union *he* so ardently and earnestly desired: the recollection that she had been slighted, neglected, nay more, ridiculed by Edward, and that the blooming creature now her victim was the favoured, the adored, the worshipped, of that same man, preyed upon her; and when she had ascertained the view Miss Dalling took of the subject, the dread she felt of entailing a father's curse upon *him* whom she so dearly loved, her utter abhorrence of connecting herself with a family against the will of its representative, her fear of the privations, the sufferings to which she saw that Edward would be exposed after he had taken this hostile step, Rachel knew the chord to strike; she enlarged upon every observation made by her "dear friend," and having worked upon her with a vivid description of the tremendous effects of Lord Belmont's rage, left her to *act* upon the intelligence she had given her, having first recommended her to apply for counsel to her father, whose pride, Rachel was well assured, would give the fullest effect to the suggestions of his daughter's anxiety for Bramley.

It worked as it was wished; Dalling took

fire at the haughty, and, as *he* considered it, insolent rejection of the alliance with his daughter; he felt displeased at the half-measured conduct of Edward himself, and, warm with the offence he considered levelled at him, determined upon the course to be pursued, and forthwith acted upon his determination.

It is curious to observe the many cases in which similar effects are produced by different causes, or rather, the various feelings and actions which, though not even remotely assimilating, equally conduce to the same end. The resolution decidedly to reject all temporizing, and to terminate all communication with the Belmont family, was equally strong on the part of Dalling and his daughter; but while *his* firmness on the subject arose from an irritated feeling of affront, *her's* originated in that true affection for a beloved object, which can sacrifice the best and dearest hopes of existence, rather than injure *him* by whom it has been excited. It was this tender solicitude, this anxious desire of devoting *herself* to save her Edward from unhappiness, which (surprisingly, it must be confessed, to Dalling,) induced this exemplary girl to enter into her father's views

of the immediate necessity of cutting short all connexion between herself and her lover.

To Edward, who was not aware of his father's determination to quit the country for ever, in case of his marrying, and who, perhaps, had he known of such a determination, would not have written the note Ford had so kindly and readily undertaken to deliver, how great must have been the surprise when he received the following letter from Dalling, enclosing one from Rose? It was overwhelming!

“DEAR SIR, Emmerton Rectory.

“In expressing my surprise that the determination of my Lord Belmont upon the subject, which you thought proper to refer to his consideration, should not have been communicated direct from you to me, I consider it my duty to inform you, that having *accidentally* heard the result of his Lordship's deliberations, I must deny myself the pleasure of any further communication with you.

“I thus hastily address you, fearing lest my conduct last night, at a period when I was wholly uninformed of Lord Belmont's decision, might lead you to suppose that I should be

inclined to admit your visits here as usual; your own good sense, and those high and honourable feelings which you have ever exhibited during our past acquaintance, will convince you at once of the impossibility of continuing that intercourse, from which, I am proud to confess, I have received much pleasure and gratification.

“ I shall not, most assuredly, under my circumstances, dwell upon the extraordinary degree of displeasure which I am told you know my Lord Belmont to have expressed at the suggestion of an alliance with my family. You must be well aware that I was wholly ignorant of the existence of the attachment, which, had I earlier discovered it, I should sooner have brought to a decisive conclusion. It may seem that my daughter merits some reproach for having delayed for a moment coming to an explanation with me, after she was conscious of its existence; but she has convinced me of the correctness of her feelings, and explained some circumstances, which at the time, I admit, greatly annoyed me.

“ Lest you should imagine that I am enforcing my decrees against the will of my

daughter, and in order at once to show you the real state of her feelings, and to mark the perfect uselessness of any thing like an attempt to shake our decision, I forward by her desire a letter, which she requests you will read with calmness ; and, wounded as we both feel, not by you, but by the intemperate language of your father, *we unite* in entreating you to use no efforts to alter the determination which we have both expressed, and from which no consideration upon earth can induce us to deviate.

“ I cannot conclude this letter without assuring you of my warm and affectionate esteem, and, most fervently and sincerely wishing you every happiness which this world can afford during your passage through it, remain

“ Your’s most truly,

“ G. W. DALLING.”

Whatever attention Bramley might be disposed at all times to pay to any thing coming from the lip or pen of the amiable and exemplary Dalling, the feeling of interest excited by the arrival of the paquet, was not only divided between the envelope and the enclosure,

but, to speak truth, the greater share was given to that part of the despatch which was in the hand-writing of Rose. Edward broke the well-known seal, and read the following lines :

“ Situated as I am, and in the present stage of our acquaintance, nothing, as I am sure you will believe, except the sanction, indeed the desire of a parent, would induce me to address you in a letter ; but, as I know how highly you prize candour, and as I have nothing to reproach myself with in the conduct I have hitherto adopted towards you, I have acceded to the wish of my kind and excellent father, and write to you for the first and last time to assure you of the firmness of my resolution, and the necessity of your conforming to the rule I have spontaneously and voluntarily laid down for my future conduct.

“ I should be ashamed of my past behaviour, I should be unworthy of your esteem, which I hope never to forfeit, did I prudishly affect to equivocate or temporize with the subject so near my heart. I have confessed an attachment which I feel no shame in avowing, for it was founded upon esteem for those high qua-

lities and honourable feelings with which your character abounds; had fate and fortune conspired to make me yours, my happiness would have been complete, and the only care of my life would have been an assiduity in promoting yours; but if candour bids me say this, it bids me add, that the line is now drawn, our parents disapprove the union, and I have too much affection for my father, and too much regard for you, to suffer *him* to be degraded, or *you* embarrassed, by an inauspicious introduction into your family. You understand me; I anticipated the proposal I should have received from you, had I not taken the resolution of forewarning you against making it. I will open no letter, I will admit no visit from you; no, Edward, it must not be.

“You must not accuse me of a wish to retain an interest in your heart, which can avail either of us nothing, in what I am going to say. To you, this struggle of separation will be momentary, when compared with the continuous regret which I am doomed to feel through a long and dreary life; you, courted, sought, and honoured in the world, will mingle with society in its gayest forms, and become

an actor in scenes of which *we* as yet have only read or heard, and whose fascinations are still as strange to you as to me. I remain in my solitude with the same duties to fulfil, the same offices to perform. In the mind of a girl so domesticated, so *home-bred* as myself, whose range of thought, whose circle of amusement are so restricted, the one—one feeling will rest and remain for ever; you and happiness are associated there: when you are gone, that hope of happiness is eternally blighted. I say this, not to recall the hours that are past,—never to return; I allude to my own feelings, not with a wish of exciting yours, but to endeavour to show you how much greater the sacrifice is, to which *I* voluntarily submit, than that, which duty and reason compel *you* to make. It is by the aid of religion, by that consolation which the wicked know not of, that my aching heart will be soothed and supported. Let me entreat you, then, follow the example I set:—go, seek your father—be restored to his love, to his house, to his heart; forget that *I* ever lived, and if you seek a proof of that affection which I scorn to conceal from you, find it in the determination I have made, never to see you more.

“ I have established to myself a rule of conduct;—if we meet, that rule is broken, and I must seclude myself to avoid you. You know the power you have over me, and I know your generosity; you will not use it, to make her, who once thought herself yours, unhappy, and least of all will you use it, to make her contemptible in the eyes of the world, or, what would be yet more terrible, contemptible in her own.

“ It was from Rachel Ford I heard of what had passed in your family on the subject. Your father seems labouring under some strange delusion about us; but he can never now be undeceived—it is all too late for explanations. The books you lent me, I have sent with this, together with the drawings which *were* yours *before*, and which I made last year for you. I pray God to bless you, and make you happy, and to support me in this hour of trial; but, in concluding, I repeat that no power on earth will induce me to see you again. I cannot—cannot end this so!—One word more!—Heaven in its mercy bless you, and save me from myself!

“ Farewell for ever!”

“She discards me—she rejects me,” cried Edward: “I have lost her—for ever lost her. Stern, cruel-hearted father!”

“Why this agony of grief?” said Ford, who had entered the room at the moment unperceived by Edward; “what has happened?”

“Ford,” said Edward, “the Dallings reject me — spurn me — drive me from their society!”

Ford stood aghast,—he was not at all prepared for this, for having himself most sedulously kept secret all that had occurred in his house during the last eight-and-forty hours, he had hoped the fact that Lord Belmont was there, had not reached the Rectory; little did he imagine whence the Dallings had obtained their information.

“You *must* marry her, Sir,” said Ford, contracting his brow, and biting his lips.

“Never, unless my father consents—never, Ford, never! I know the high spirit of the family; they scorn our new-fangled aristocracy. Will my father see me?”

“I think not,” said Ford.

“But now, Ford, that I tell you my union with Rose is impossible—is prohibited, irrevoc-

cably prohibited; surely the sacrifice being made and his point gained, my father will admit me to his presence."

"Perhaps," said Ford, "it may not be the best plan to try the experiment at the present moment: if you concede this, he will force another match upon you, and ——"

"I thought," exclaimed Edward, "you told me no such proposition was probable."

"I was mistaken, Sir," said Ford, "for most assuredly there is such a scheme in agitation."

"Let me hear my father's proposals from himself, Mr. Ford: am I not his equal? Where is the distinction between the son and sire that he should thus negotiate with me through a third person?"

"His anger ——"

"His anger," said Edward, "must abate when he finds that I have not even the choice left of sinning against his will."

"That *he must never know*," muttered Ford.

"How so?"

"If he thought it possible that such a person as the Dallings could reject an alliance with *his* family upon any terms, what would his feelings be?"

“ I really cannot imagine,” exclaimed Edward; “ what they ought to be I can most distinctly define. My father seems entirely in error about the Dallings: what does he consider them to be—vagabonds, plebeians, outcasts?”

“ Not so, my dear Sir,” said Ford, “ he has made up his mind; and yet, yet I cannot but think if you persisted in your determination, with respect to Miss Dalling, he would consent to the marriage.”

“ How inconsistent is this conduct then!” replied Edward: “ what does it mean? There appears an infatuation about it which is to me perfectly inexplicable. Will he see Dalling?”

“ Certainly not.”

“ Will he see me?”

“ No.”

“ What then are his intentions?”

“ I will go to him now:—promise to take no step till I return.”

“ I will make no such promise,—either let me see my father, or be yourself the bearer of a note to him.”

“ That which I *did* convey this morning had only the effect of increasing his irritation.”

“ But this, which I shall write now, must necessarily allay it—it is the annunciation of my relinquishment of the marriage. Whether that relinquishment be voluntary on my part, or forced upon me by circumstances over which I have no control, can matter little to him as far as regards his delicate feelings for the honour of our family,—the objection of *such a marriage* is overcome. I am content to be dutiful and wretched ; what more will he ask of me ?”

“ Much more than you will be disposed to grant ; take my advice, for the Lord knows that I speak for the best : wait till I return. I will certainly take, and deliver your note, if you feel it important ; but I would advise again that you should *not* give up your intentions, but stipulate for his consent to the match with Miss Dalling. What can he do ? What can he wish ?—he has but only you, he has no other child ; upon you must devolve his honours and title. Why, after the first ebullition of his rage is over, why, I ask,

should he deny his acquiescence? And if he do deny it, why not carry off the girl, and so force him into compliance?"

"I see," said Edward, "you are as ignorant of the character of the Dallings as my father; and however much I may be surprised at your suggesting a step so extraordinary, I can assure you that no power, no entreaty, no desperation of mine could induce Rose to take such a step."

"The Lord knows our hearts!" sighed Ford, turning his eyes upwards; "but I doubt whether any philosophy will stand against the persuasions of love."

"Philosophy may not, Sir," said Edward, "but principle will; and, therefore, put out of your calculation all underhand manœuvring with the Dallings. They have told us their feelings plainly and candidly, and I know enough of them to know that they will act up to them."

"But if his Lordship *did* sacrifice his scruples, and consent to the marriage?"

"Then," said Edward, "why should the Dallings object? or, if my father is disposed to such a concession now, why should he have

so sternly and stubbornly rejected my proposition at first?"

"Things *may* change; and let me entreat you, as I before did, to remain quietly here till I return from your father. This conduct of the Dallings may perhaps alter his mind, and, at all events, there is nothing better to be done at the moment that I can see."

This last recommendation of the proposed measure was certainly the strongest, and accordingly Ford was permitted to take his own way: Edward, confident in his zeal from the peculiar interest he expressed upon the subject, and full of hope from the influence he knew he possessed over his father, and from the decided manner in which he put extreme cases, and recommended extraordinary measures.

While he was absent, Edward again read the letter of Rose Dalling, and felt that it almost *required* an answer; yet, to send one after her command that he should not write, and her declaration that she would not receive any letter from him, would be to seem regardless of her injunctions, and incredulous of her earnestness; he therefore determined to wait as patiently as he could until the return of his

emissary, when, perhaps, he might in triumph claim the lovely girl as his own.

The hours crept until five o'clock in the afternoon, when Ford entered the apartment, his eye beaming with victory:—his agitation was great, the expression of his countenance novel and extraordinary.

“There ! there !” said he, in an exulting tone, throwing a letter on the table ; “there,—it is done !—it is settled ! we have carried our point, and Rose Dalling is yours !”

“Best of friends !” exclaimed Edward ; “are you serious ? speak.”

“It is as true as Holy Writ,” said Ford ; “trust not to me, but read—read yourself.”

Edward burst open the letter ; it was from his father, and thus it ran:—

“There are circumstances under which a deviation from fixed principles may be admitted, and, however averse I might originally have been from the measure submitted to me by you, with respect to your marriage with Miss Dalling, the negotiation on your part has assumed an entirely new character, and has put the matter in a light which renders any

farther objection on my part wholly impossible. I therefore not only consent to the measure, but I desire that no delay may be made in the fulfilment of the solemn engagement. However unwilling I may be to commit myself farther, it may be necessary to say, that my public duties will prevent my remaining to witness the ceremony; nor, under the circumstances, am I led to suppose, that my absence will be much regretted by any of the parties concerned.

“Mr. Ford will explain all the particulars of settlement, allowance, &c. &c. during my lifetime, and, as I am anxious to say as little upon the painful subject as possible, I must refer you and Dr. Dalling to him upon all matters of business.

“Any communications to be made to me may also be made through the same channel.

“Yours,

“BELMONT.”

“What does *this* mean?” said Edward; “why this fresh insult?”

“Insult!” repeated Ford; “why, he consents!”

“Consents! but do you really know so little

of the family most implicated in this affair, as to suppose that they will consider the thing mended by this precious document?"

"I know what *I* consider it," said Ford: "such a document, that, had it pleased the Lord to have put it in your father's mind to have directed your choice to *my* daughter, I should have returned thanks for the gracious interference in my behalf which procured it."

"Mr. Ford," said Edward, "are you trifling with me, or not? and does my father suppose that this will satisfy a man of Dr. Dalling's character?"

"This! why there is no necessity," said Ford, "to shew *this*. I am a *living* witness to your father's consent; he means you to marry Miss Dalling: you know his manner—but that is all, and——"

"I'll go to him this instant," said the agitated son, "and see whether plain sense and plain truth will not have the due weight with him."

"Go to *him*!—to whom?—to my Lord?"

"To be sure!—why not?"

"Because, Mr. Bramley, he is already gone."

"Gone!—Whither?"

"To his court upon the Continent, Sir. Do you know so little of his Lordship's value and importance to the State, as to suppose he could be spared for any length of time from his mission? Does he not explain that?"

"Gone?" cried Edward; "my father *gone* without seeing me?—without speaking to a child who never wronged, who never disobeyed him in a single instance?"

"Then, Sir," said Ford, in a somewhat authoritative tone, "obey him now, and marry the girl."

"The girl!" muttered Edward, and looking at Ford as if he could have cut him into pieces for the expression: "*the girl*, Mr. Ford, will not marry *me* upon such credentials as these; nor should she, if she would. Either Miss Dalling comes into our family the acknowledged wife of its heir, or not at all—at *present*."

Ford was not in the least prepared for the high tone in which his young friend spoke. He changed colour—felt himself counteracted in a plan which he knew nobody had suspected, and stammered out something which sounded like compulsion.

"It is surprising above all things to *me*,"

said Edward, "that my father, after having in the strongest, I will add, rudest manner, rejected any thing like a connexion with this family, should, in a manner equally abrupt, and certainly more unaccountable, command me imperatively to do *that*, which a few hours before he so positively prohibited."

"His wishes, his desires I know, Sir; he thinks, he feels that you ought to marry Miss Dalling, and he sacrifices every thing to what he considers due to your character."

"*My* character!—whose character is at stake here?"

"My dear Sir," said Ford, "all I can say is, that your father insists upon your marrying the young woman; and you can have no reason for refusing to do that which is so extremely pleasant to yourself. This note is to *you*, not to *her*, or her father; and simply stating that you have his Lordship's consent, will satisfy them, and——"

"You mistake, you mistake, my dear Mr. Ford," said Edward; "all negotiation upon the affair 'must be open and above board.' Dr. Dalling will not permit, nor will I request,

his daughter to be my wife upon sufferance. If my father had visited them—seen them——”

“Seen them!” echoed Ford, in a very particular tone.

“Ay, Sir, seen them!—and why not?”

“I cannot answer questions for Lord Belmont,” said Ford. “If you choose *me* to negotiate the affair, it shall be conducted satisfactorily to all parties, and I pledge myself to obtain Miss Dalling’s acquiescence, and her father’s consent, to your union.”

“And I will pledge myself to the contrary,” said Edward.

“Will you allow me to make the experiment?”

“On your own responsibility, Sir; but make me no party to it; tell them plainly my opinion.”

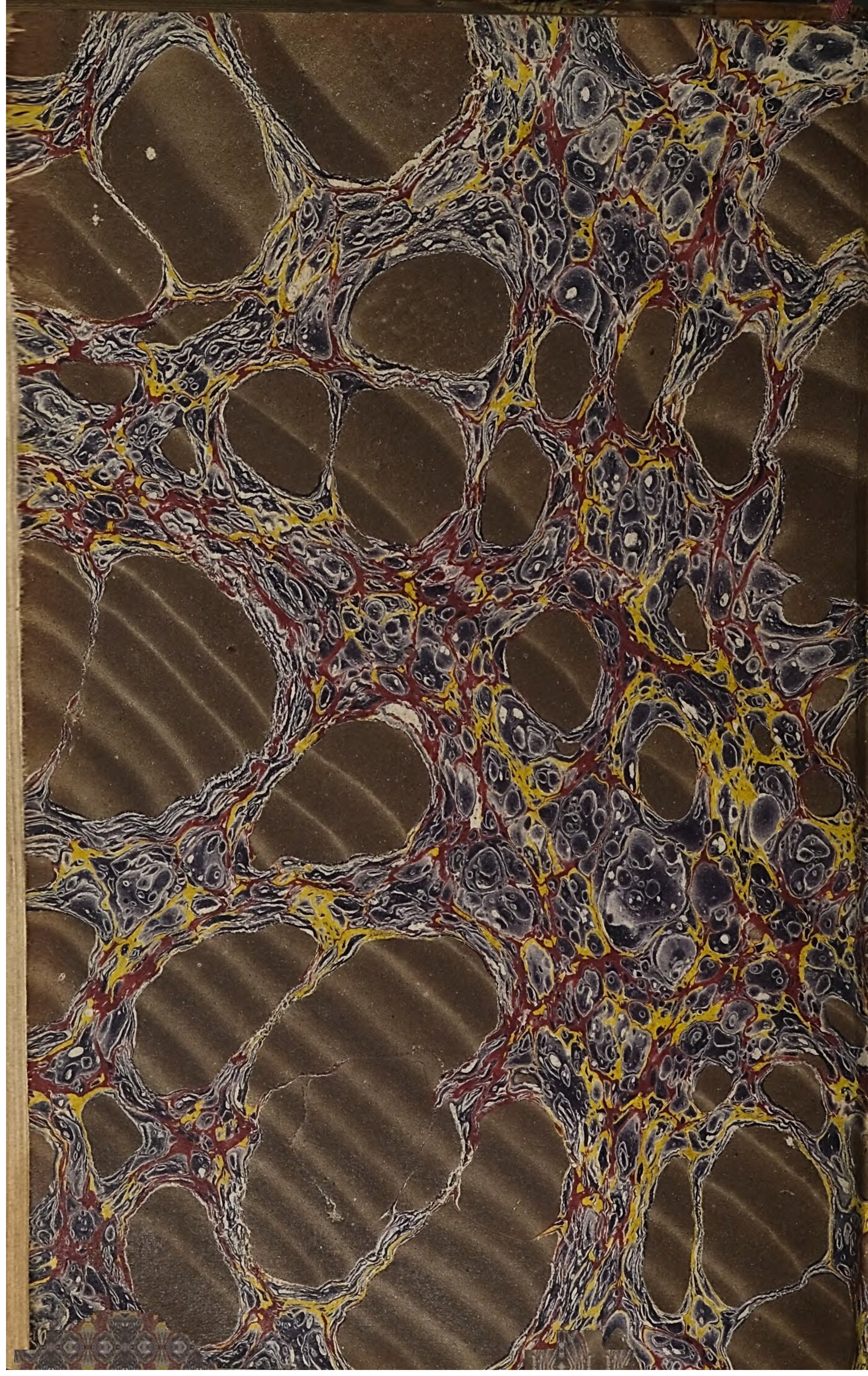
“Enough! I ask no more!” said Ford; “you shall have the girl, and be happy; in less than an hour, by the blessing of Providence, it shall be settled. Wait till I return, and carry you triumphantly to receive the treasure you most prize on earth: I know the arrangement is certain.”

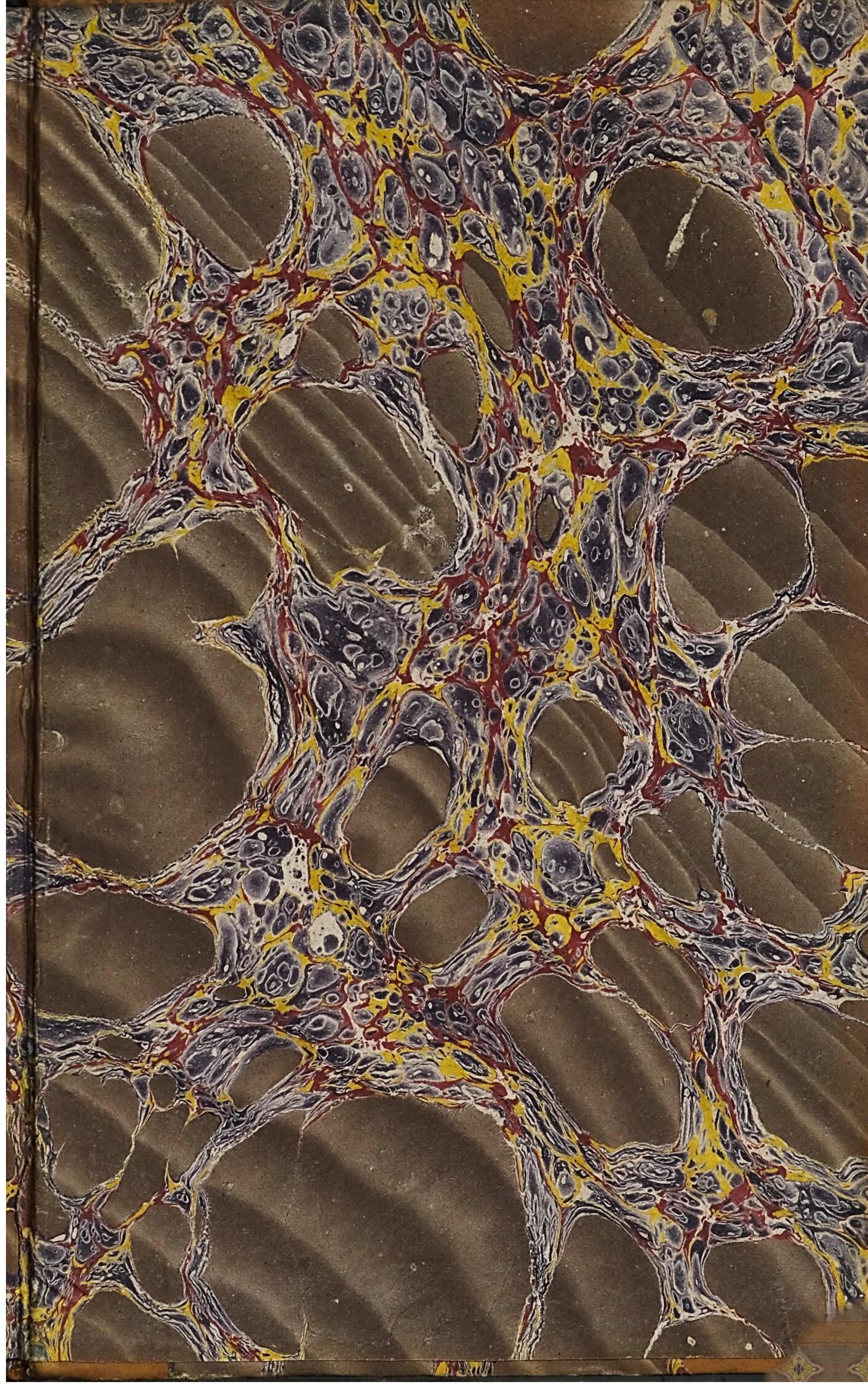
Edward, half stupified with grief at his father's extraordinary conduct towards him, and willing to catch at any thing likely to bring about what he felt to be so highly improbable, suffered Ford to proceed on his delicate mission, and threw himself upon a sofa to reconsider the curious aspect of affairs at the moment.

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